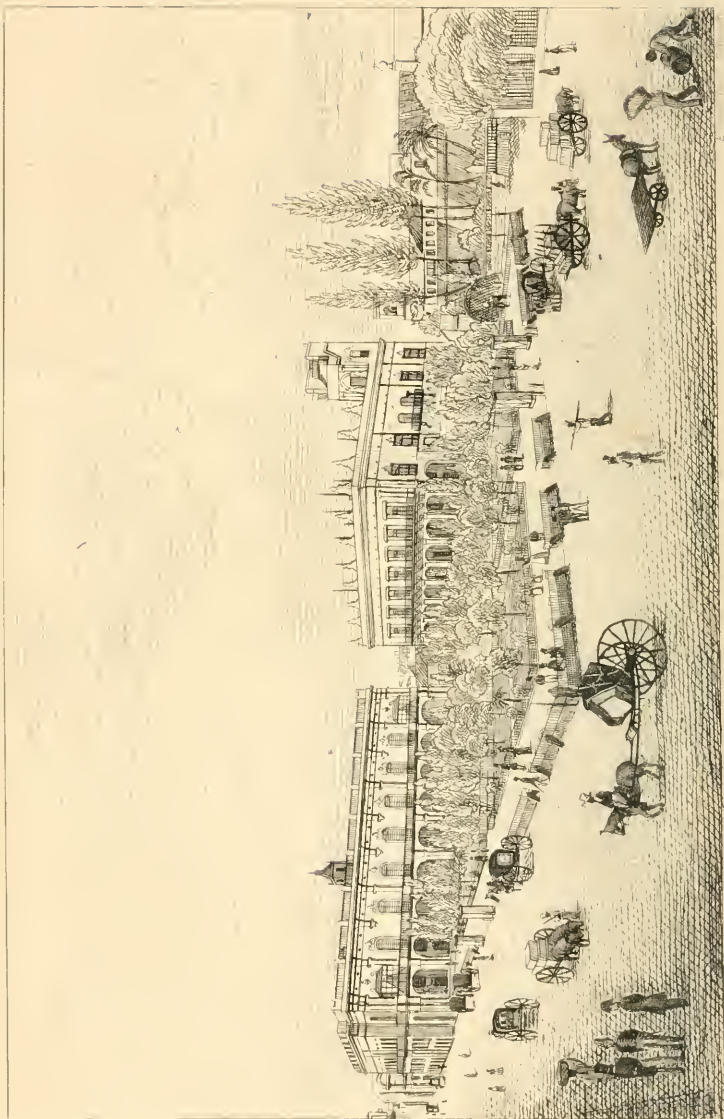


nia

Specif:

Hamett L. Munnay.



Amos A. Lawson

LIFE IN MEXICO

Hamilton & Hamann

DURING A

RESIDENCE OF TWO YEARS

IN

THAT COUNTRY.

BY MME. C——— DE LA B———.

Thou art beautiful,
Queen of the valley ! thou art beautiful !
Thy walls, like silver, sparkle to the sun,
Melodious wave thy groves. . . .
Southey's Madoc.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.



BOSTON:
CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN.
1843.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1842, by
ALEXANDER D. INGLIS,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY FREEMAN AND BOLLES,
WASHINGTON STREET.

An earthquake — Honorable Mr. — Broken furniture — <i>Dias</i> — Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe — Party to the <i>Desierto</i> — <i>Itzcuintepotzotli</i> — Inn of <i>Guajimalco</i> — Ruined convent — Its origin — <i>Déjeuné à la fourchette</i> — Splendid scenery — Vow to the Virgin — Musical mass — Tacuba — Ride with the Prior,	27
---	----

LETTER THE THIRTIETH.

Christmas day — Kalends and mass — Amateur performances — Solo — <i>Posadas</i> — Wandering of the Holy Family — <i>Nacimiento</i> — Crowded party — French cooks — Mexican cook — State of household — New Year's day — Mass — Dirtiness of the churches, &c. — Comparisons — Private chapels — English club — Preparations for journey,	37
---	----

LETTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

Leave Mexico — Cuernavaca — <i>Tierra Caliente</i> — <i>Atlacamulco</i> — Orange groves — Sugar cane — Annual produce — Will of Cortes — Description — Coffee plantation — Scorpions — List of venomous reptiles — <i>Acapansingo</i> — Doubts and difficulties — A decision,	47
---	----

LETTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

Leave <i>Atlacamulco</i> — Assemble by star-light — Balmy atmosphere — Flowers and trees of the tropics — The formidable <i>barrancas</i> — Breakfast under the trees — Force of the sun — <i>Meacatlan</i> — Hospitality — Profitable estate — Leave Meacatlan — Beautiful village — Musical bells — Ride by moonlight — Sugar fires — Cocoyotla — Old gentleman — Supper — Orange trees and cocoas — Delicious water — Sugar estates — A scorpion — Set off for the cave — Morning ride — Dangerous path,	58
---	----

LETTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

Cave of <i>Cacahuamilpa</i> — Superstition — Long-bearded goat — Portal — Vestibule — Fantastic forms — Breakfast —	
---	--

Pine torches — Noble hall — Stalactites and stalagmites — Egyptian pyramids — Double gallery — Wonderful formations — Corridor — Frozen landscape — Amphitheatre — World in chaos — Skeleton — Wax lights — Hall of angels — Return — Distant light — Indian — Alcalde — *Cautlamilpas* — Rancho — Return to Cocoyotla — Chapel — Meacatlan — Eclipse of the moon — Benighted travellers — Indian village — *El Puente* — Return to *Atlacmulco*, 68

LETTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

Ride by star-light — Fear of robbers — Tropical wild flowers — Stout escort — *Hautepec* — Hacienda of *Cocoyoc* — A fire — Three thousand orange trees — Coffee mills, &c. — Variety of tropical fruits — Prodigality of nature — *Casa-sano* — Celebrated reservoir — Ride to Santa Clara — A philosopher — A scorpion — Leave Santa Clara — Dangerous *barranca* — *Colon* — Agreeable house — Civil *administrador* — San Nicolas — Solitude — Franciscan friar — Rainy morning — Pink turban — Arrival at *Atlisco* — Cypress — Department of Puebla — Volcanoes — Doña Marina — Verses — *Popocateptl* — Cholula — Great pyramid — Arrival at Puebla, 83

LETTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

Theatre — Portmanteaus — Visitors — Houses of Puebla — Fine arts — Paseo — Don N. Ramos Arispe — Bishop — Cotton factories — Don Esteban Antuñano — Bank of *Avio* — United States machinery — Accidents — Difficulties — Shipwrecks — Detentions — Wonderful perseverance — “*La Constancia Mejicana*” Hospital — Prison — El Carmen — Paintings — Painted floors — Angels — Cathedral — Gold and jewels — A comedy — Bishop’s palace — Want of masters, 99

LETTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

Concert — Diligence — Leave Puebla — Escort — View from the cathedral towers — Black forest — History of the

crosses — Tales of murder — An alarm — Report of a skirmish — Rio Frio — Law concerning robbers — Their *moderation* — Return to Mexico — Carnival ball — Improvement in dress, 110

LETTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

Distinguished men — Generals Bustamante, Santa Anna and Victoria — Anecdote — Señor Pedraza — Señor Gutierrez Estrada — Count Cortina — Señor Gorostiza — Don Carlos Bustamante — “Mornings in the Alameda” — Don Andrés Quintana Roo — Don Lucas Alaman — General Moran — General Almonte — Señor Cañedo — Señors Neri del Barrio and Casaflores — Doctor Valentin — Don Francisco Tagle — Eight revolutions, 120

LETTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

New minister — San Angel — Profitable pulque estate — The village — Surrounding scenery — The Indians — The *padre* — The climate — Holy week in the country — Dramatic representations — Coyohuacan — The Pharisees — Image of the Saviour — Music and dresses — Procession — Catholicism amongst the Indians — Strange tradition — Paul the Fifth — Contrast between a Mexican and a New England village — Love of fireworks — Ferdinand the Seventh — Military ball — *Drapeaux*, . . . 130

LETTER THE THIRTY-NINTH.

Holy Thursday at Coyohuacan — Hernan Cortes — His last wishes — *Padres Camilas* — Old church — Procession — Representation of the taking of Christ — Curate's sermon under the trees — A religious drama — Good Friday — Portable pulpit — Heat — Booths — Religious procession — Simon the Cyrenian — Costumes — Curate's sermon — Second discourse — Sentence pronounced by Pontius Pilate — Descent from the cross — Procession of the Angels — Funeral hymn — The *pesame* to the Virgin — Sermon — “Sweet Kitty Clover” — Music in Mexico — Anecdote, 141

LETTER THE FORTIETH.

Balloon — San Bartolo — Indian women — A beauty — Different castes — Indians — Their character, &c. — Those of noble race — Ball at the French minister's — *Abecilla* — Danger of walking unattended — Shooting party — A murder — Robbery of a farm house — Discomfited robber captain — The "*Zambos*" — Letters and visitors — Country life in Mexico, 153

LETTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

Gambling — Fête at San Agustin — Breakfast at San Antonio — Report — Cock-fight — Ladies — Private gambling — A *vaca* — The *Calvario* — Bonnets — Dinner — Evening ball — Mingling of classes — Copper tables — Dresses and decorations — Indian bankers, male and female — Decorum — Habit — Holders of banks — Female gambler — Robbery — Anecdote — Bet — *Casa de Moneda* — Leave San Angel — Celebration — Address — Cross and Diploma — Reply — Presentation of a sword — Discourses and addresses — Reflections, 168

LETTER THE FORTY-SECOND.

Italian opera — Artists, male and female — Prima Donna — Lucia de Lammermoor — Some disappointment — Second representation — Improvement — Romeo and Giulietta — La Ricci — La Señora Cesari — The mint — False coining — Repetition of Lucia — Procession by night — A Spanish beauty — Discriminating audience — A little *too simple* — Gold embroidery — Santiago — Pilgrims — Old Indian custom — Soirée — Mexico by moonlight — Mysterious figure — Archbishop — Viceroy, 190

LETTER THE FORTY-THIRD.

Revillagigedo — The false merchant and the lady — The Viceroy, the unjust Spaniard, the Indian, and the golden ounces — Horrible murder — Details — Oath — Country family — The spot of blood — The mother unknowingly

denounces her son — Arrest of *the three* — Confession — Execution — The Viceroy fulfils his pledge — Paving of the streets — Severity to the monks — Solitary damsel — Box on the ear — Pension — Morning concert — New Minister — “Street of the sad Indian” — Traditions — A farewell audience — Inscription on a tomb, . . . 203

LETTER THE FORTY-FOURTH.

Agitation — Storm — Revolution — Manifesto — Resembling a game of chess — Position of the pieces — Appearance of the city — Firing — State of parties — Comparisons — “*Comicios*” — The people — Congress — Santa Anna — Amnesty offered — Roaring of cannon — Proclamation — Time to *look at home* — The will of the nation — Different feelings — Judge’s house destroyed — The mint in requisition — Preparations — Cannonading — “*Los Enanos*,” 222

LETTER THE FORTY-FIFTH.

Leave Mexico — Travelling equipage — San Xavier — Fine hacienda — Millionaires — Well-educated ladies — Garden, &c. — Tlanapantla — Indian hut — Mrs. Ward — Doña Margarita — The *pronunciamiento* — False step — Santa Anna in Puebla — Neutrality — General Paredes — President in Tlanapantla — Tired troops — Their march — Their return — Curate’s house — Murder — General Paredes in the Lecheria — President in Tlanapantla — A meeting — Return of the President and his troops — General Paredes and his men — Santa Anna in Tacubaya — A junction — President in Mexico — *Allied sovereigns* — Plan — Articles — President declares for federalism — Resigns — Results — Hostilities — Capitulation — Triumphal entry — Te Deum — New ministry, 235

LETTER THE FORTY-SIXTH.

Santa Mónica — Solidity — Old paintings — Anachronism — Babies and nurses from the *Cuna* — Society — Funds

— Plan — Indian nurses — Carmelite convent — Midnight warning — Old villages and churches — Indian bath — San Matéo — The Lecheria — Fertility — *Molino Viejo* — Dulness — Religious exercises — Return to Mexico — Mexican hotel — New generals — Disturbances — General Bustamante — Inconvenience — Abuses in the name of Liberty — Verses — Independence celebrated, . . . 256

LETTER THE FORTY-SEVENTH.

Opera — Santa Anna and his suite — His appearance — *Belisario* — Solitary “*viva!*” — Brilliant house — Military dictatorship — *San Juan de Dios* — Hospital de *Jesus* — *Cuna* — Old woman and baby — Different apartments — *Acordada* — Junta — Female prisoners — Chief crime — *Travaux forcés* — Children — Male prisoners — *Forçats* — Soldiers gambling — Chapel — Confessional — Insane hospital — Frenchmen — Different kinds of insanity — Kitchen — Dinner — Insane monk — “Black chamber” — Soldiers — College — Santa Anna’s leg — Projects — All Saints — Señora P——a — Leave-takings, . . . 272

LETTER THE FORTY-EIGHTH.

Leave Mexico — Diligence — Indian padre — Brandy-drinking female — Bad roads — Beautiful view — Escort — Good breakfast — Crosses — Robber’s head — Select party — Lerma — Valley of Toluca — Hacienda — Toluca — Count de B—— and Mr. W—— The comandante — Gay supper — Colonel Y—— Day at Toluca — Journey to *La Gabia* — Heat and hunger — Pleasant quarters — Princely estate — El Pilar — A zorillo — A wolf — Long journey — Tortillas — Count de B—— State of Michoacan — Forest scenery — *Trojes of Anganguero* — Comfort, 300

LETTER THE FORTY-NINTH.

Leave *Trojes* — Beautiful territory — Tarrascan Indians — Taximaroa — Distressed condition — An improvement —

Cold morning — Querendaro — Fine breed of horses — San Bartolo — Produce — Country proprietors — *Colear* — Ride to Morelia — Wild ducks — Sunset — Cathedral bell — Cuincho — Curates Morelos, Matamoros and Hidalgo — Warm baths — Handsome girls — Starving travellers — Lost mules — Lancers — Night on a heap of straw — Mules found — Tzintzontzan — King Calsonsi — Pascuaro — Kind reception — Bishop — Robbers — Curu — Night in a barn — Mountain — Uruapa — Enchanting scenery — Pleasant family — Jorullo, 317

LETTER THE FIFTIETH.

Indian dresses — Saints — Music — Union of tropical and European vegetation — Old Customs — Falls of the Sararaqui — Silkworms — Indian painting — Beautiful heroine — Leave Uruapa — Tziracuaratiro — Talkative Indian — Alcalde's house — Pascuaro — Old church — Mosaic work — The lake — The cave — Fried fish — Rich Indians — Convent — Cuincho — Darkness — Morelia — Alameda — Cathedral — Silver — Waxworks — College — Wonderful fleas, 346

LETTER THE FIFTY-FIRST.

San Bartolo — Mass — Market — Rancheros — San Andrés — Insanity — Rancho — House of Don Carlos Heimbürger — Wild scenery — German songs — Las Millas — Leave-taking — Storm — Rainbow — El Pilar — La Gabia — Toluca — News — Copper *pronunciamento* — Return to Mexico — General Moran — Funeral obsequies — New theatre — *Cock's mass* — Santa Clara — Santa Fé prisoners — New year, 371

LETTER THE FIFTY-SECOND.

Last day in Mexico — Theatre — Santa Anna — French minister's — Parting — Diligence — Last look of Mexico — Fatigue — Robbers — Escort — Second impressions — Baths at Jalapa — Vera Cruz — Some account of San

Juan de Ulua — Siege of 1825 — Siege of 1838 — General Bustamante — Theatre — Of the north winds, . . .	391
---	-----

LETTER THE FIFTY-THIRD.

Sail in the Tyrian — Norther off Tampico — The bar — The river Panuco — The Pilote — The shore — Alligator — “ <i>Paso de Doña Cecilia</i> ” — Tampico — Spanish consul’s house — Society — Navigation — Banks of the Panuco — Extraordinary inoculation — The “ <i>glorieta</i> ” — Leave Tampico — Furious norther — Voyage — Arrival at Havana,	405
--	-----

LETTER THE FIFTY-FOURTH.

Havana — The carnival — The Elssler — La Angosta — <i>Ingenio</i> of Count V——a — General Bustamante — Lord Morpeth — Leave Havana — Voyage in the Medway — Old friends — Return to the United States,	420
--	-----



LETTERS FROM MEXICO.

LETTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

Fête-day — Friendly Hint — Precautions — General tranquillity — President in San Agustin — Revisit Museum — Ancient manuscripts — Sculpture — Bronze bust, &c. — Freshness after rain — Ball at the French Minister's — Pamphlet — Gutierrez Estrada — His character — Concealment — *Mexicalsingo* — Minister of the Treasury — Archbishop's permission — Paintings — Mexican Painters — Santa Teresa — Description of the interior — The Penitences — Tortures — Disciplines, &c. — Supper — Profane ballads — Monasteries — San Francisco — *Padre Prior* — Soldiers and Friars.

October 3d.

YESTERDAY being C——n's fête-day, we had a dinner and small soirée, and according to custom, visits the whole day. A very agreeable guest from Havana, Don J—— A——, arrived to spend a few weeks with us. We had rather a pleasant party, and some good singing; but just as dancing had begun, C——n took me aside, and showed me a little friendly note which he had received while at dinner,

from General —, in which he informs him that the robbers would in all probability attack our respective houses that night ; that he had taken his precautions, and advises C——n to do the same, in the understanding that, if necessary, they should mutually assist each other ! A pleasant piece of intelligence ! The thing got whispered about, and some of the ladies looked a little blank at the information ; but there could be no risk, while so many persons were collected. About one they went away, and C——n sent for some soldiers, to keep watch all night. Nothing happened ; as no doubt the robbers found out what precautions had been taken. The intended attack had been discovered by a servant of the General's, who heard them discussing the matter in the back room of a pulque-shop.

We have been obliged to procure two old soldiers as porters, in lieu of the two who were shot in the revolution ; for though not killed, they are entirely disabled for the present.

Mexico appears particularly quiet just now ; and whatever storms may be preparing, no symptoms are visible to the uninitiated eye. The palace has got in its glass eyes again, and externally is almost entirely repaired ; but it is not yet fit for the residence of the President, who still *holds his court* in the convent of San Agustin. I have been driving about with our Havana friend, like an old resident, showing the beauties of Mexico to a stranger. We have been in the Minería, Museum, Botanical Garden, Biscay College, &c., all which can bear revision.

The Museum especially, which, owing to the want

of arrangement and classification in the antiquities and the manner in which they are crowded together in the different rooms of the University, appears at first undeserving of much attention, improves upon acquaintance. It is only since the year '25 that it was established by the government, and various plans have been since made for enriching and arranging it, and also for transporting it to the old building of the Inquisition. But as yet, nothing essential has been carried into effect.

It contains upward of two hundred historical manuscripts, some in hieroglyphical characters anterior to the conquest, and many in the different ancient languages of the country. Of the ancient sculpture, it possesses two colossal statues and many smaller ones, besides a variety of busts, heads, figures of animals, masks, and instruments of music or of war, curiously engraved, and indicating the different degrees of civilization of the different nations to whom they belonged. A great many of the vases of *tecal*, and of the candlesticks in clay, curiously worked, were drawn from excavations in the Isle of Sacrifices, near Vera Cruz, from Oajaca, &c., and from the suburbs of Mexico. There is also a collection of very ancient medals, to the number of six hundred, a bronze bust of Philip the Fifth, and about two hundred Mexican paintings, comprehending two collections of the portraits of the Spanish Viceroy's, many of the celebrated Cabrera's, and various dresses, arms, and utensils, from both the Californias. In the cabinet of natural history there is a good collection of minerals, and some very fine specimens of gold and silver. But

in the animal or vegetable branch of natural history there is a great deficiency, and altogether the Museum is not worthy of a country which seems destined by nature to be the great emporium of all natural science.

Of course, we have revisited old Chapultepec, and Our Lady of Guadalupe, with her Legend and Holy Well. In the morning we have rode to Tacubaya and the environs, and the weather at that early hour has the most indescribable freshness, caused by the evening rains. Everything looks bright and sparkling. The Peruvian trees, with their bending green branches and bunches of scarlet berries, glitter with the heavy rain-drops, and even the hoary cypresses of Chapultepec sparkle with water in all their gigantic branches. Little pools have become ponds, and ditches rivulets, and frequently it is rather wading than riding, which is not so pleasant.

24th. — Last evening we had a very pretty ball in the house of the French Minister, where all the Paris furniture was very effective. There were as usual plenty of diamonds, and some handsome dresses — mine white satin, with flowers.

25th. — The whole world is talking of a pamphlet written by Señor Gutierrez Estrada, which has just appeared, and seems likely to cause a greater sensation in Mexico than the discovery of the gunpowder plot in England. Its sum and substance is the proposal of a constitutional monarchy in Mexico, with a foreign prince (not named) at its head, as the only remedy for the evils by which it is afflicted. The pamphlet is written merely in a speculative form, in-

culcating no sanguinary measures, or sudden revolution ; but the consequences are likely to be most disastrous to the fearless and public-spirited author. Even those who most question his prudence in taking this step, agree that in this, as well as in every other political action of his life, he has acted from thorough conviction and from motives of the purest patriotism, unalloyed by one personal feeling ; indeed, entirely throwing behind him every consideration of personal or family interest, which even the best men allow to have some weight with them on such occasions.

In a political review of Mexico, written some years ago by a Mexican who deals fearlessly and it would seem impartially with the characters of all the leading men of that period, I find some remarks on Señor Gutierrez Estrada, which you will place more faith in, as coming from a less partial source than from persons so attached as we are to him and his family. In speaking of the conduct of the administration, he says ; — “ Señor Gutierrez Estrada was one of the few who remained firm in his ideas, and above all, true to his political engagements. This citizen is a native of the State of Yucatan, where his family, who are distinguished in every point of view, reside. It is unnecessary to say that Gutierrez received a thorough and brilliant education, as it is sufficient to have conversed with him to discover this fact ; nor that he knew how to turn it to account in the career of public service to which he devoted himself, and in which he has remained pure and unblemished, in the midst of a corrupt class. From the first he was destined to the European Legations, on account of his

fluency in speaking and writing both English and French ; and he is one of the few who have employed their time usefully in the capitals of the Old World. Flexible by nature, honorable by education, and expeditious in business, his services have been perfect, and above all, loyal and conscientious." He goes on to say that, "notwithstanding the gentleness of his temper, his political conscience is so firm and pure, that he will never yield in what he considers his obligation, *even when it interferes with the most intimate friendships, or most weighty considerations.*" One would think that the writer had foreseen the present emergency. I have not yet read the pamphlet which the friends of the author consider an equal proof of his noble independence, bold patriotism, and vast information ; being, to say the truth, much more interested in its domestic effects than in its public results, or even in its intrinsic merits.

26th. — Soldiers were sent to the house of the Countess de la C——a, to arrest her son-in-law, but in compliance with the entreaties of his family, he had gone into concealment. I found them in great affliction, but they are so accustomed to political persecution from one party or another, particularly the Countess, that her courage has never deserted her for a moment. He is accused in Congress — in the senate house — a proclamation is made by the President, anathematizing his principles — even the printer of the pamphlet is thrown into prison. Nothing else is spoken of, and the general irritation is so terrible, that it is to be hoped his place of concealment is secure ; otherwise the consequences may be fatal.

On pretend that many distinguished men here hold the same opinions, but their voices, even were they to venture to raise them, could not stem the tide of public indignation. The most offended are naturally the military men. . . . In short, Señor Gutierrez, who has been passing four years abroad, in countries where hundreds of obscure scribblers daily advocate republicanism or any wild theory that strikes their fancy, with the most perfect security, was probably hardly aware of the extraordinary ferment which such a pamphlet was likely to produce at the present juncture.

27th. — A few days before Señor A—— left us, we went up the canal, in a canoe, as far as Santa Anita, to show him all that remains of the Chinampas. It is as pleasant a way of passing an evening, as any that I know of here.

We drove lately to Mexicalsingo, where there is a cave, in which is a figure of our Saviour, which they pretend has lately appeared there. . . .

The excitement concerning the pamphlet seems rather to increase than diminish, but Señor Gutierrez has many devoted friends, and the place of his retreat is secure. There is little doubt that he will be forced to fly the country.

29th. — Señor Don Xavier Hechavarria, Minister of the Treasury, has sent in his resignation. Being a man of large private fortune, extremely simple in his habits, and the most amiable of men in domestic life, I believe that no minister has ever thrown off, with more unaffected satisfaction the burthen of state

•

affairs, or will enjoy his retreat from public life with more true philosophy.

I have been so much interested in the affairs of the C——a family, that I have forgotten to tell you of my having obtained permission from the Archbishop to visit the Santa Teresa, accompanied by one young married lady, who has a sister there. The Archbishop desired that our visit should be kept a secret ; but it has *oozed* out by some means or other, probably through the nuns themselves, and exposed him to so much inconvenience and such a torrent of solicitations from those ladies who, having daughters or sisters amongst the nuns, are naturally most desirous to see them, that I fear, notwithstanding his good nature, he will put a veto on all my future applications. You will think I pass my time in convents, but I find no other places half so interesting, and you know I always had a fancy that way.

In some of these convents there still exist, buried alive like the inmates, various fine old paintings ; amongst others, some of the Flemish school, brought to Mexico by the monks, at the time when the Low Countries were under Spanish dominion. Many masters also of the Mexican school, such as Enriquez, Cabrera, &c., have enriched the cloisters with their productions, and employed their talent on holy subjects, such as the lives of the saints, the martyrs, and other Christian subjects. Everywhere, especially, there are *Cabrer*as, an artist somewhat in the Luca Giordano style ; the same monotony, facility, and “*fa presto Luca !*” All his pictures are agreeable,

•

and some strikingly beautiful. Occasionally he copies from the old masters, but rarely. Ximenes and Enriquez are not so common, and some of their productions are very good, and deserve to be better known than I imagine they are in Europe. They are a branch of the Spanish school, and afford striking proofs of the extraordinary talent of the Mexicans for the fine arts, as well as of the facilities which the mother-country afforded them.

But it is in the convent of the Profesa that the finest paintings are, and there I cannot enter ! The galleries are full of paintings, the most part by Cabrera ; and C——n speaks with enthusiasm of one exceedingly beautiful painting, in the sacristy of the chapel, said to be an original Guido, being a representation of Christ tied to the pillar, and scourged, in which the expression of pure Divinity and suffering humanity is finely blended, and well contrasted with the savage cruelty in the countenances of his executioners. But most of these paintings are neglected, and so falling to decay that it is pitiable to look at them.

The Santa Teresa, however, has few ornaments. It is not nearly so large as the *Encarnacion*, and admits but twenty-one nuns. At present there are, besides these, but three novices. Its very atmosphere seems holy, and its scrupulous and excessive cleanness makes all profane dwellings appear dirty by comparison. We were accompanied by a Bishop, Señor Madrid, the same who assisted at the Archbishop's consecration ; a good-looking man, young and tall, and very splendidly dressed. His robes were

of purple satin, covered with fine point lace, with a large cross of diamonds and amethysts. He also wore a cloak of very fine purple cloth, lined with crimson velvet — crimson stockings, and an immense amethyst ring.

When he came in, we found that the nuns had permission to put up their veils, rarely allowed in this order in the presence of strangers. They have a small garden and fountain, plenty of flowers, and some fruit ; but all is on a smaller scale, and sadder than in the Convent of the Incarnation. The refectory is a large room with a long narrow table running all round it ; a plain deal table with wooden benches ; before the place of each nun, an earthen bowl, an earthen cup with an apple in it, a wooden plate and a wooden spoon ; — at the top of the table a grinning skull, to remind them that even these indulgences they shall not long enjoy.

In one corner of the room is a reading desk, a sort of elevated pulpit, where one reads aloud from some holy book, whilst the others discuss their simple fare. They showed us a crown of thorns which, on certain days, is worn by one of their number, by way of penance. It is made of iron, so that the nails entering inwards, run into the head, and make it bleed. While she wears this on her head, a sort of wooden bit is put into her mouth, and she lies prostrate on her face till dinner is ended ; and while in this condition, her food is given her, of which she eats as much as she can, which probably is none.

We visited the different cells, and were horror-struck at the self-inflicted tortures. Each bed con-

sists of a wooden plank raised in the middle, and on days of penitence, crossed by wooden bars. The pillow is wooden, with a cross lying on it, which they hold in their hands when they lie down. The nun lies on this penitential couch, embracing the cross, and her feet hanging out; as the bed is made too short for her upon principle. Round her waist she occasionally wears a band with iron points turning inwards; on her breast a cross with nails, of which the points enter the flesh, of the truth of which I had melancholy ocular demonstration. Then, after having scourged herself with a whip covered with iron nails, she lies down for a few hours on the wooden bars, and rises at four o'clock. All these instruments of discipline, which each nun keeps in a little box beside her bed, look as if their fitting place would be in the dungeons of the Inquisition. They made me try their *bed and board*, which I told them would give me a very decided taste for early rising.

Yet they all seem as cheerful as possible, though it must be confessed, that many of them look pale and unhealthy. It is said, that when they are strong enough to stand this mode of life, they live very long; but it frequently happens that girls who come into this convent, are obliged to leave it from sickness, long before the expiration of their noviciate. I met with the girl whom I had seen take the veil, and cannot say that she looked either well or cheerful, though she assured me, that "of course, in doing the will of God," she was both. There was not much beauty amongst them generally, though one or two had remains of great loveliness. My friend, the

Madre A——, is handsomer on a closer view than I had supposed her, and seems an especial favorite with old and young. But there was one whose face must have been strikingly beautiful. She was as pale as marble, and though still young, seemed in very delicate health ; but her eyes and eyebrows as black as jet, the eyes so large and soft, the eyebrows two pencilled arches ; and her smiles so resigned and sweet, would have made her the loveliest model imaginable for a Madonna.

Again, as in the Incarnation, they had taken the trouble to prepare an elegant supper for us. The Bishop took his place in an antique velvet chair, the Señora —— and I were placed on each side of him. The room was very well lighted, and there was as great a profusion of custards, jellies and ices, as if we had been supping at the most profane *café*. The nuns did not sit down, but walked about, pressing us to eat, the Bishop now and then giving them cakes, with permission to eat them, which they received laughing. They have the most humble and caressing manners, and really appear to be the most amiable and excellent women in the world. They seem to make no ostentation of virtue, but to be seriously impressed with the conviction that they have chosen the true road to salvation ; nor are there in them any visible symptoms of that spiritual pride from which few devotees are exempt.

After supper, a small harp was brought in, which had been sent for by the Bishop's permission. It was terribly out of tune, with half the strings broke ; but we were determined to grudge no trouble in put-

ting it in order, and giving these poor recluses what they considered so great a gratification. We got it into some sort of condition at last, and when they heard it played, they were vehement in their expressions of delight. The Señora ——, who has a charming voice, afterwards sang to them, the Bishop being very indulgent, and permitting us to select whatever songs we chose, so that when rather a profane canticle, "The Virgin of the Pillar," (*La Virgin del Pilar*) was sung, he very kindly turned a deaf ear to it, and seemed busily engaged in conversation with an old Madre, till it was over.

We were really sorry to leave them; particularly as it is next to impossible that we shall ever see them again; and it seemed as if in a few hours a friendship had been formed between us and these recluses, whose sensations are so few, they must be the more lasting. The thoughts of these poor women cost me a sad and sleepless night. They have sent me some wax figures, dressed in the costumes of the different orders, beginning with their own. They wear the coarsest and hardest stuff next their skin, in itself a perpetual penance.

In these robes they are buried; and one would think that if any human being can ever leave this world without a feeling of regret, it must be a nun of the Santa Teresa, when, her privations in this world ended, she lays down her blameless life, and joins the pious sisterhood who have gone before her; dying where she has lived, surrounded by her companions, her last hours soothed by their prayers and tears, sure of their vigils for the repose of her soul,

and above all sure that neither pleasure nor vanity will ever obliterate her remembrance from their hearts.

At matins, at vespers, at the simple board, at the nightly hymn, she will be missed from their train. Her empty cell will recall her to their eyes; her dust will be profaned by no stranger's footstep, and though taken away, she still seems to remain amongst them. . . .

As for the monasteries, not only no woman can enter, but it is said, with what truth I know not, that a Vice-Queen having insisted on the privilege of her vice-royalty to enter, the gallery, and every place which her footsteps desecrated, were unpaved. This was very Saint Senanus like, and *peu galant*, to say the least.

The finest convent of monks in Mexico is that of San Francisco, which from alms alone, has an immense annual rent. According to Humboldt, it was to have been built upon the ruins of the Temple of Huitzilopochtli, the god of war; but these ruins having been destined for the foundation of the cathedral, this immense convent was erected where it now stands, in 1531. The founder was an extraordinary man, a great benefactor of the Indians, and to whom they owed many useful mechanical arts which he brought them from Europe. His name was Fray Pedro de Gante — his calling that of a lay-friar — and his father was the Emperor Charles the Fifth!

Of the interior of this convent I am enabled to give you a partial description, but whether from hearsay, in a vision, or by the use of my natural eyes, I shall not disclose. It is built in the form of a square,

and has five churches attached to it. You enter a gate, pass through the great, silent, and grass-grown court — up the broad stair-case, and enter the long, arched cloisters, lighted by one dim lamp, where everything seems to breathe a religious repose. . . .

The padre-prior, seated alone in his cell, with a thick and richly-clasped volume before him, a single lamp on his table, on the wall a crucifix, plain but decent furniture, with his bald head, and pale, impressive face, would have made a fine study for a painter. By such men, the embers of learning and of science were nursed into a faint but steady flame, burning through the long, gloomy night of the dark ages, unseen by profane eyes, like the vestal fire in Pagan temples. . . .

A small room, opening into his little parlor, contains his bed, on which is a mattress; for the padres do not perform such acts of self-denial and penitence as the cloistered nuns — and I am assured that his cigars are genuine Havana. . . .

Beggars lounging within the court-yard — a group of monks talking together within the walled enclosure. . . .

Change the scene to the monastery of San Agustin, and you might fancy yourself in the days of one of Walter Scott's romances, in the *mélange* of soldiers and friars; for here His Excellency the President has his temporary abode; and the torch-light gleams brightly on the swarthy faces of the soldiers, some lying on the ground enveloped in their cloaks; others keeping guard before the convent gate. This convent is also very large, but not so immense as that of

San Francisco. The padre prior is a good little old man, but has not the impressive, ascetic visage of the guardian of the other convent. His room is as simple, though not in such perfect order; and his bed is also furnished with a comfortable mattress. An air half military, half monkish, pervades the convent — aids-de-camp of the President passing along the galleries, their uniforms contrasting with the dark robe of a passing monk, returning at night-fall to his cell.

The President had an alarm the night preceding, the prisoners in the jail having broken out. A serious affray had been expected, and everything was prepared for putting the person of the President in safety. The back stairs and secret passages in these old convents lead to excellent hiding-places, and have been put to frequent use during the revolutions. In the old Monte Pio there is a communication with a convent of nuns, and in cases of pillage, the jewels used to be carried by a private staircase out of Monte Pio, and placed under the care of the nuns of Santa Brigida.

The convent of la Profesa is also a fine and spacious building, but excepting that it has a greater number of good paintings than the others, when you have seen one, you have seen all, and I believe none are as large as that founded by the illegitimate scion of the Imperial Charles, who himself ended his days in a similar retreat.

LETTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

Dia de Muertos — Leave Mexico — *Herraderos* — San Cristobal — Tunas — Plaza de toros — Throwing the *lazo* — Accidents — Rustic breakfast — Country fare — Baked meat — Indian market — Buried bull — Mountain — Solitary *hacienda* — *Reyes* — Mules marked — Return — Queen of Spain's birth-day — Diplomatic dinner.

SANTIAGO, November 3d.

YESTERDAY, the second of November, a day which for eight centuries has been set apart in the Catholic Church for commemorating the dead, the day emphatically known as the "*Dia de Muertos*," the churches throughout all the Republic of Mexico present a gloomy spectacle ; darkened and hung with black cloth, while in the middle aisle is a coffin, covered also with black, and painted with skulls and other emblems of mortality. Every one attends church in mourning, and considering the common lot of humanity, there is, perhaps, not one heart over the whole Catholic world, which is not wrung that day, in calling up the memory of the departed.

After early mass, we set off for Santiago, where we intend to spend a week, to be present at the *Herraderos* — the marking of the bulls with a hot iron with the initials of the proprietor's name ; stamping them with the badge of slavery — which is said to be an extraordinary scene ; to which all rancheros

and Indians look forward with the greatest delight. We had a very pleasant journey here, leaving Mexico at six in the morning, and travelling at the usual rate, with *seven* horses and plenty of *mozos*. Indeed, no one attempts a journey of any length into the country, without at least six horses or mules.

Near Sopayuca, while they were changing horses, we went to mass, in the picturesque church of San Cristobal. The magnificence of these places of worship is extraordinary. Here was this country church crowded with *léperos*, the officiating priests, Indians with bare feet ; yet the building large and rich, hung with black cloth, and lighted with great tapers which threw their gloomy rays on as much of the rich gilding that encrusted the walls, as the dark pall left visible.

We got into the carriage a basket of that most refreshing of fruits, the *tuna*, which grow wild in abundance all over the country. The first time I unwarily pulled them off the trees, I got my fingers full of the innumerable little prickles which cover the skin, and which it is very difficult to get rid of. The Indians have great dexterity in gathering and peeling them. There is the green and the red tuna ; the last the prettiest to look at, but not nearly so agreeable a fruit as the other.

When we arrived at Santiago, we sat down to dinner to the number of about fifty persons, and in the room next us, was a party still larger, of lower degree, for all the world has come to be present at this annual festivity.

6th. — The next morning we set off early to the

plaza de toros. The day was fresh and exhilarating. All the country people from several leagues round were assembled, and the trees up to their very top-most branches presented a collection of bronze faces and black eyes, belonging to the Indians, who had taken their places there as comfortably as spectators in a one-shilling gallery. A platform opposite ours, was filled with the wives and daughters of agents and small farmers, little *rancheras*, with short white gowns and rebosos. There was a very tolerable band of music, perched upon a natural orchestra. Bernardo and his men were walking and riding about, and preparing for action. Nothing could be more picturesque than the whole scene.

Seven hundred bulls were driven in from the plains, bellowing loudly, so that the air was filled with their fierce music. The universal love which the Mexicans have for these sports, amounts to a passion. All their money is reserved to buy new dresses for this occasion, silver rolls or gold linings for their hats, or new deerskin pantaloons and embroidered jackets with silver buttons. The accidents that happen are innumerable, but nothing damps their ardor. *It beats fox hunting.* The most striking part of the scene is the extraordinary facility which these men show in throwing the laso. The bulls being all driven into an enclosure — one after another, and sometimes two or three at a time were chosen from amongst them, and driven into the plaza, where they were received with shouts of applause if they appeared fierce, and likely to afford good sport, or of irony if they turned to fly, which happened more than once.

Three or four bulls are driven in. They stand for a moment, proudly reconnoitring their opponents. The horsemen gallop up, armed only with the laso, and with loud insulting cries of "*Ah toro !*" challenge them to the contest. The bulls paw the ground, then plunge furiously at the horses, frequently wounding them at the first onset. Round they go in fierce gallop, bulls and horsemen, amidst the cries and shouts of the spectators. The horseman throws the laso. The bull shakes his head free of the cord, tosses his horns proudly, and gallops on. But his fate is inevitable. Down comes the whirling rope, and encircles his thick neck. He is thrown down struggling furiously, and repeatedly dashes his head against the ground in rage and despair. Then, his legs being also tied, the man with the hissing red-hot iron in the form of a letter, brands him on the side with the token of his dependence on the lord of the soil. Some of the bulls stand this martyrdom with Spartan heroism, and do not utter a cry ; but others, when the iron enters their flesh, burst out into long bellowing roars, that seem to echo through the whole country. They are then loosened, get upon their legs again, and like so many branded Cains, are driven out into the country, to make way for others. Such roaring, such shouting, such an odor of singed hair and *biftek au naturel*, such playing of music and such wanton risks as were ran by the men !

I saw a toreador, who was always foremost in everything, attempting to drag a bull by the horns, when the animal tossed his head, and with one jerk of one horn, tore all the flesh off his finger to the very bone.

The man coolly tore a piece off a handkerchief, shook the blood off his finger with a slight grimace, bound it up in a moment and dashed away upon a new venture. One Mexican, extraordinarily handsome, with eyes like an eagle, but very thin and pale, is, they say, so covered from head to foot with wounds received in different bull-fights, that he cannot live long; yet this man was the most enthusiastic of them all. His master tried to dissuade him from joining in the sport this year; but he broke forth into such pathetic entreaties, conjuring him "by the life of the Señorita," &c., that he could not withhold his consent.

After an enormous number of bulls had been caught and *labelled*, we went to breakfast. We found a tent prepared for us, formed of boughs of trees intertwined with garlands of white moss, like that which covers the cypresses at Chapultepec, and beautifully ornamented with red blossoms and scarlet berries. We sat down upon heaps of white moss, softer than any cushion. The Indians had cooked meat under the stones for us, which I found horrible, smelling and tasting of smoke. But we had also boiled fowls, and quantities of burning chile, hot tortillas, atole or *atolli* as the Indians call it, a species of cakes made of very fine maize and water, and sweetened with sugar or honey; *embarrado*, a favorite composition of meat and chili, very like *mud*, as the name imports, which I have not yet made up my mind to endure; quantities of fresh tunas, grana-ditas, bananas, aguacates, and other fruits, besides pulque *à discretion*.

The other people were assembled in circles under the trees, cooking fowls and boiling eggs in a gipsy fashion, in caldrons, at little fires made with dry branches ; and the band, in its intervals of tortillas and pulque, favored us with occasional airs. After breakfast, we walked out amongst the Indians, who had formed a sort of temporary market, and were selling pulque, chia, roasted chestnuts, yards of baked meat, and every kind of fruit. We then returned to see a great bull-fight, which was followed by more *herraderos* — in short, spent the whole day amongst the *toros*, and returned to dinner at six o'clock, some in coaches, some on horseback. In the evening, all the people danced in a large hall ; but at eleven o'clock I could look on no longer, for one of these days in the hot sun is very fatiguing. Nevertheless, at two in the morning, these men, who had gone through such violent exercise, were still dancing jarabes.

8th. — For several days we lived amongst bulls and Indians, the *herraderos* continuing, with variation of *colear*, riding the bulls, &c. Not the slightest slackening in the eagerness of the men. Even a little boy of ten years old, mounted a young bull one day, and with great difficulty and at a great risk, succeeded in forcing him to gallop round the circle. His father looked on, evidently frightened to death for the boy, yet too proud of his youthful prowess to attempt to stop him.

At night, when I shut my eyes, I see before me visions of bulls' heads. Even when asleep I hear them roaring, or seem to listen to the shouts of "*Ah*

toro!” The last day of the *herraderos*, by way of winding up, a bull was killed in honor of C——n, and a great flag was sent streaming from a tree, on which flag was inscribed in large letters, “Gloria al Señor Ministro de la Augusta Cristina!” a piece of gallantry which I rewarded with a piece of gold.

The animal, when dead, is given in a present to the *toreadores*; and this bull, cut in pieces, they bury with his skin on, in a hole in the ground previously prepared, with a fire in it, which is then covered over with earth and branches. During a certain time, it remains baking in this natural oven, and the common people consider it a great delicacy; (in which I differ from them.)

Yesterday, we climbed to the top of a steep mountain, which cost us as much labor as if it had been that steep path which “leads to fame.” Fortunately, it has a good deal of wood, and we had an occasional rest in the shade. We mounted the hill on horseback as far as horses could go; but the principal part could only be performed on foot. Most of the party remained half way. We reached the top, swinging ourselves up by the branches, in places where it was nearly perpendicular. We were rewarded, first by the satisfaction one always has in making good one’s intentions, and next, by a wonderfully fine and extensive view. Our return was more agreeable, as the weather, except in the heat of the noon-day sun, is very cool in this part of the country. The hills are covered chiefly with tunas, low firs, and numbers of shrubs, with flowers and berries. . . . Met on our return, a horseman, who came to an-

nounce the arrival of a guest, Señor H——, from Puebla, who proved a pleasant addition to our society.

15th. — We went out early this morning, on horseback, and breakfasted at an *hacienda*, five leagues distant from Santiago, belonging to the widow of one of ——'s agents, a good-looking, respectable woman, who, alone, in this solitary place, brings up her eight children as she best can. This may really be called solitude. From one year to the other, she never sees a human being, except an occasional Indian. She is well off, and everything in her house is clean and comfortable. She herself manages the farm, and educates her children to the best of her abilities, so that she never finds time to be dull. She expected us, and gave us breakfast, (we being about twenty in number) consisting of everything which that part of the country can afford; and the party certainly did justice to her excellent fare. She gave us pulque, fermented with the juice of the pineapple, which is very good.

When the sun had gone down a little, we rode to the fine hacienda of Reyes, belonging to Señor A——, where he is making and projecting alterations and improvements. When we left Reyes, it began to rain, and we were glad to accept the covering of *sarapes*, as we galloped over the plains. We had a delightful ride. Towards evening the rain ceased, and the moon rose brightly and without a cloud; but we were certainly tired enough when we got home, having rode in all ten leagues.

17th. — These two days have been passed in seeing

the mules marked. They are even more dangerous than the bulls, as they bite most ferociously while in their wild state. When thrown down by the laso, they snore in the most extraordinary manner, like so many aldermen in an apoplectic nap.

This is, perhaps, the most useful and profitable of all Mexican animals. As beasts of burthen and for draught, they are in use over the whole republic, and are excellent for long journeys, being capable of immense fatigue, particularly in those arid, hilly parts of the country, where there are no roads. Those which go in droves, can carry about five hundred pounds weight, going at the rate of twelve or fourteen miles a day, and in this way they can perform journeys of more than a thousand miles. For constant use, they are preferable to horses, being so much less delicate, requiring less care, and enduring more fatigue. A good pair of carriage mules will cost from five hundred to a thousand dollars.

After dinner we saw some of these wild creatures that had just been caught, put into a carriage, each wild mule harnessed with a civilized one, and such kicking and flinging up of heels I never witnessed. However, the *Mozos* can manage anything, and in about half an hour, after much alternate soothing and lashing, they trotted along with the heavy coach after them, only rearing and plunging at decent intervals.

MEXICO, 12th.

We have passed ten days in the country, taking constant exercise, and have been obliged to return home rather sooner than we should have wished, in

order to mark Queen Ysabel's Day with a diplomatic dinner.

Though less is now said on the subject of the pamphlet than when we left this, the irritation seems to continue as before. Señor Gutierrez remains concealed, communicating only with his family and a few devoted friends; a most disagreeable position, and one which it is impossible for him to endure long.

20th. — Our dinner has *gone off* as well as could be expected. The party were twenty-six in number, consisting of His Grace the Archbishop, their Excellencies of the Cabinet and Corps Diplomatique, together with Count Cortina, the Valencias, and Gorostizas. The gentlemen were in full uniform — the ladies *en grande toilette* — the Archbishop in his robes. We had a band of music in the gallery, and walked in to the sound of the Norma, precedence being given to the Archbishop, who took me, or rather whom I took, as I found some difficulty in getting my arm into his robes. I believe no blunders in etiquette were committed. The dinner lasted three and a half mortal hours. The Archbishop proposed the health of Her Majesty the Queen, which was drank standing, the band performing God save the Queen. I was dreadfully tired, (though in a very agreeable position) and have no doubt every one else was the same, it being eleven when we returned to the drawing-room.

The Archbishop's familiars, two priests who always accompany him, respectable *black guards*, were already in waiting. As for him, he was as kind and agreeable as usual, and, after coffee, took his departure to the sound of music.

LETTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

Virgin of *Cavadonga* — Santo Domingo — Decorations and music — Daguerreotype — Weekly soirées — An arrival — An earthquake — Honorable Mr. — — Broken furniture — *Dias* — Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe — Party to the *Desierto* — *Itzcuintepotzotli* — Inn of *Guajimalco* — Ruined convent — Its origin — *Déjeuné à la fourchette* — Splendid scenery — Vow to the Virgin — Musical mass — Tacuba — Ride with the Prior.

21st.

WE received, a few days since, an invitation to attend the sumptuous mass, annually given by the Asturian Brotherhood, in honor of the Virgin of Cavadonga, in the church of Santo Domingo. The invitation being printed on blue satin, with gold lace and tassels, seems worthy of a place in a box of wax figures, which will be sent by the next packet.

The church was superbly decorated, and only well-dressed people were admitted. C——n was carried off to a post of honor near the altar, and a padre gave me a velvet chair. The music was beautiful, but too gay for a church. There were violins and wind instruments, and several amateur players. Some pieces from the *cheval de bronze* were very well played. The sermon, preached by Guerrero, a chanoine who has some reputation as an orator, contained a prudent degree of praise of the Spaniards, and even of a King, could that King be a *Pelayo*.

In the evening we dined at the Prussian minister's — a pleasant party.

Yesterday we went to Chapultepec, C——n and I, M. de G——t and M. de N——, to take views with the Daguerreotype, which C——n had the pleasure of receiving some time ago from Boston, from our friend, Mr. Prescott. While they were working in the sun, I finding that the excessive heat had the effect of cooling my enthusiasm, established myself with a book under Montezuma's cypress, which felt very romantic. The poetry of the scene, however, was greatly weakened by the arrival of a party of *forçats* in chains, who are working at the castle, which I believe there is some intention of having transformed into a military college. They are so insolent, that forgetting they are guarded and chained in couples, I felt glad to see that the servants were within call.

Our weekly soirées have begun, and so far, are very successful. There are now three tertulias in the week at the houses of the diplomats. We have generally music, cards, and plenty of dancing, and every one seems pleased, the best proof of which they give by generally staying till two or three in the morning.

28th. — You may imagine my joy at the arrival of K—— and A—— in health and safety at three o'clock to-day. They have had a good journey from Vera Cruz, suffering from nothing but the cold, which they felt especially at Perote. As they arrived on the day of a soirée, they did not make their appearance, being tired. I have now an excuse for re-

visiting all my old haunts, and the first week or two must pass in sight-seeing.

30th. — We dined yesterday at Tacubaya ; where the C——a family, particularly the ladies of the family, are in a state of the greatest uneasiness.

I had just written these words, when I began, to my great astonishment, to rock up and down, chair, table and myself. Suddenly, the room, the walls, all began to move, and the floor to heave like the waves of the sea ! At first, I imagined that I was giddy, but almost immediately saw that it was an earthquake. We all ran, or rather staggered as well as we could, into the gallery, where the servants were already ranged on their knees, praying and crossing themselves with all their might. The shock lasted above a minute and a half, and I believe has done no injury, except in frightening the whole population, and cracking a few old walls. All Mexico was on its knees while it lasted, even the poor madmen in San Hepolito, which A—— had gone to visit in company with Señor —— . I have had a feeling of sea-sickness ever since. They expect a return of the shock in twenty-four hours. How dreadful a severe earthquake must be ! how terrible it is to feel this heaving of the solid earth, to lose our confidence in its security, and to be reminded that the elements of destruction which lurk beneath our feet, are yet swifter and more powerful to destroy, than those which are above us. . . .

I cannot help laughing yet at the recollection of the face of a poor little clerk who had just entered the house with a packet of letters for C——n. He

did not kneel, but sat down upon the steps as pale as death, looking as "cream-faced" as the messenger to Macbeth; and when the shock was over, he was so sick, that he ran out of the house without making any remarks. The scarlet *huacamaya*, with a loud shriek, flew from its perch, and performed a zig-zag flight through the air, down to the troubled fountain in the court.

Your friend, the honorable Mr. —, arrived the other day, looking very ill, having had the yellow fever at Havana very severely, a peculiar piece of bad fortune at this season. . . .

All the furniture we ordered from the United States, arrived some time ago, a mass of legs and arms. Tables, wardrobes, &c., were, I believe, all sold for the mahogany, at Vera Cruz. The mirrors also arrived *in powder*. This must be owing to bad packing, since our most delicate things from London, such as crystal, porcelain, &c., have arrived in excellent condition.

3d December. — Have had many visits to-day, this being my *dia de fiesta*. Amongst others the President was here. This custom of keeping people's *Dias*, gives one a great deal of trouble, but the omission is considered rather a breach of politeness.

12th. — This being the anniversary of the day of the miraculous apparition of our Lady of Guadalupe, the cathedral and village will be crowded with Indians from all parts of the country. A—— and Mr. B—— have driven over there; but, from all accounts, the crowd will be so great, that we are not

tempted to accompany them. We have a *soirée* this evening, and have had two pleasant parties this week at the other houses. Tomorrow we intend going with a large party to the *Desierto*, where some gentlemen are to give a breakfast. I understand that there are to be twenty-three people on horseback, and eighteen in carriages, and our *trysting-place* is by the great fountain with the gilt statue, in the Paseo de Bucarelli; the hour, half past seven. They say the Desierto is a beautiful place, but being seven leagues from Mexico, we shall probably all return as tired as possible.

15th. — The morning of our party to the Desierto was beautiful. Here one need not fear those contretemps in regard to the weather, which in England so often render a party of pleasure painful; unless, indeed, one chooses to select an evening in the rainy season for an expedition. We met by the fountain at the hour appointed, some in carriages, and some on horseback. Of the latter I formed part. The road leads along the aqueduct by Chapultepec, and through Tacubaya, and is the high road that goes to Toluca. The first part, after passing Tacubaya, is steep, bleak, and uninteresting. Plantations of maguey and occasional clumps of Peruvian trees are the only vegetation, and Indian huts the only traces of human life. But after a tedious ascent, the view looking back upon Mexico, with all her churches, lakes and mountains, is truly magnificent. The road also begins to wind through a fertile and wooded country. About noon we reached an inn, where travellers stop who are going to Toluca, and where

we halted to collect our scattered forces. Hanging up by a hook in the entry, along with various other dead animals, polecats, weasels, &c., was the ugliest creature I ever beheld. It seemed a species of dog, with a hunch back, a head like a wolf, and no neck, a perfect monster. As far as I can make out it must be the *itzcuin tepotzotli*, mentioned by some old Mexican writers. The people had brought it up in the house, and killed it on account of its fierceness. This inn stands in the valley of Guajimalco, and is about a league from the Desierto.

There is no longer any road there, but a steep and winding path through the beautiful woods. Therefore those who had come in coaches, were now obliged to proceed on donkeys, with Indian guides. The beauty of the scenery is indescribable. The path winds ascending through a wilderness of trees and flowering shrubs, bathed by a clear and rapid rivulet, and every now and then, through the arched forest trees, are glimpses of the snowy volcanoes and of the distant domes and lakes of Mexico.

The ruins of the old Carmelite convent, standing on the slope of a hill, are surrounded by noble forests of pine and oak and cedar ; long and lofty forest-aisles, where the monks of former days wandered in peaceful meditation. But they removed from this beautiful site to another, said to be equally beautiful and wilder, also called the Desierto, but much farther from Mexico ; and this fertile region (which the knowing eye of a Yankee would instantly discover to be full of capabilities in the way of machinery) belongs to no one, and lies here deserted, in solitary

beauty. Some poor Indians live amongst the ruins of the old cloisters, and the wild deer possess the undisputed sovereignty of the woods.

It is said that a benighted traveller, who had lost his way in these solitudes, and was miraculously saved from dying of cold, founded this rich convent of Carmelite monks, in gratitude to Heaven for his deliverance, bequeathing his desire, that all travellers who passed that way should receive hospitality from the convent. Certainly no place more fitted for devotion, could have been selected than this mountain retreat ; and when the convent bell tolled at evening, calling the monks to prayer, and wakening the echoes of the silent hills, its deep notes must have been all in unison with the solemn scene.

But the sight of a very magnificent *déjeuné à la fourchette*, spread under the pine trees, the uncorking of Champagne bottles and Scotch ale, the savory odors of soups and fricandeaus, the bustling attendance of English waiters, put to flight all romantic fancies. We remembered that we were hungry, that we had ridden seven miles and had not breakfasted ; and no order of friars could have done more justice to the repast than we did. . . . But the component parts of a party of pleasure must be very curiously selected, the mosaic of the society very nicely fitted, or it will inevitably terminate unpleasantly ; and the elements of discord are more dangerous, their effects more lasting than even the coughs, and colds, and rheumatisms produced by those watery elements, sworn foes to all picnics and gipsy parties in our foggy island. . . .

About four o'clock we remounted our horses, and retraced our path through the woods ; and who could ruminate on petty disputes, or complain of trifling accidents, or not forget any disagreeable individuals who might have been found among our numerous party ; when the splendid panorama of Mexico burst upon us, with all its mountains, lakes and plains, its churches, and towers, and gardens, bathed in a flood of golden light, the rich crimson clouds of sunset resting upon the snow of the volcanoes, while the woods through which our horses picked their steps, over stones and streamlets, were fragrant with blossoming shrubs and wild roses.

When we reached the inn where the carriages had been left, we remounted our horses, and as it was growing dusk, and the whole party had not yet collected together, we thought it advisable for the equestrian part of the expedition to ride forward ; so leaving the carriages with their escort, we set off for Mexico ; C——n, I, A—— and a servant, at full gallop, and hardly drew our bridles till we reached the city ; tired, as you may suppose, after our fourteen leagues ride.

20th. — Our yesterday evening's tertulia was very crowded ; and there was a great deal of music and dancing. These weekly *soirées* are decidedly successful, and the best families in Mexico unite there without etiquette, which we were told it was impossible to bring about. . . .

Perhaps it is that I am getting accustomed to the Mexican style of face, but it appeared to me that there was a great deal of beauty assembled ; and as

for fine voices, they are as common in Mexico as they are rare in England. . . .

A rich Senator, Don B—— G——, made a vow to the Virgin some years ago, that he would cause a splendid mass to be performed annually, in the Cathedral, at his own expense, in honor of our Saviour's birth, on the morning of Christmas Eve. This mass is performed entirely by amateurs, most of the young ladies in Mexico who have fine voices, taking a part in it. I was *drawn in*, very unwillingly, to promise to take a trifling part on the harp, the accompaniment to the *Incarnatus*.

Preparations have long been going on for this solemnization, and various rehearsals have taken place amongst the amateur singers, in the evening, before large audiences in the Mineria. The whole thing promises well.

28th. — C——n has gone with Señor Zurutuza (a Spanish gentleman) to Cuernavaca, in *tierra caliente*, to spend a few days at his estate in the neighborhood ; which at this season will be delightful.

This morning we rode to San Joaquin, where we met the prior on horseback, on his way to Mexico to confess the old prioress of the convent of Santa Teresa. He turned back, and accompanied us during all the rest of our ride. He rode with us to Tacuba, round the traces of the ruins, and to the fine old church and dismantled convent, where we dismounted, and having taken off our riding-hats, accompanied the prior through the deserted cloisters into the old church ; and I imagine we must have

looked very picturesque ; I in my riding-habit, and the sandalled friar in his white robes, kneeling side by side, on the broken steps of the altar. He is so pleasant and well-informed, that he is a particularly agreeable companion.

LETTER THE THIRTIETH.

Christmas day — Kalends and mass — Amateur performances — Solo — *Posadas* — Wandering of the Holy Family — *Naciminto* — Crowded party — French cooks — Mexican cook — State of household — Yew Year's day — Mass — Dirtiness of the churches, &c. — Comparisons — Private chapels — English club — Preparations for journey.

25th.

CHRISTMAS DAY! One year this evening, since we made our entry into Mexico. What a different aspect everything has assumed to us in one year! Then every object was new, every face that of a stranger. Now we are surrounded by familiar sights and sounds, and above all by friendly faces. But though novelty, which has its charms and also its *désagrémens* has gone, nothing in Mexico ever appears commonplace. Everything is on a large scale, and everything is picturesque. Then there is so much interest attached to its old buildings, so much to see, even though there are no *sights* and no show-places, unless we are to put in that class the Mineria, Museum, Cathedral, University and Botanic Garden, usually visited by travellers, that at whatever period we may leave it, I feel convinced we shall regret some point of interest, that we have left unvisited. . . .

Some days ago, colored cards printed in gilt let-

ters, were sent round, inviting all the Senator's friends to the mass, in this form :

“ J——é B——o G——a requests that you will honor him with your presence and that of your family, in the solemn function of Kalends and Mass with which he annually makes a humble remembrance of the Birth of the Saviour, which festivity will take place on the morning of the 24th of this month, at nine o'clock, in the Parish Church of the *Sagrario* of the Holy Cathedral.

“ Mexico, December, 1840.”

By nine we were all assembled in the choir ; Don B——o in his uniform, dark blue and gold, we in mantillas. The church looked very splendid, and as usual on these occasions, no léperos were admitted ; therefore the crowd was very elegant and select. The affair went off brilliantly. Four or five of the girls, and several of the married women, have superb voices ; and not one of all those who sang in chorus, has a bad voice. The finest I almost ever heard, is that of the Señorita C——. Were she to study in Italy, I venture to predict that she might rival Grisi. Such depth, power, extension and sweetness, with such richness of tone in the upper notes, are very rarely united. She sang a solo in such tones that I thought the people below must have felt inclined to applaud. There are others whose voices are much more cultivated, and who have infinitely more science. I speak only of the raw material. The orchestra was really good, and led by a first-rate musician. I was thankful when my part of the entertainment was over, and I could give my undivided

attention to the others. The celebration lasted four hours, but there was rather a long sermon. You will shortly receive a detailed account of the whole, which is to be published in the Mexican Annual called "The Ladies' Guide."

In the evening we went to the house of the Marquesa de V——o, to spend Christmas Eve. On this night all the relations and intimate friends of each family assemble in the house of the *head of the clan*, a real gathering, and in the present case, to the number of fifty or sixty persons.

This is the last night of what are called the *Posadas*, a curious mixture of religion and amusement, but extremely pretty. The meaning is this. At the time that the decree went forth from Cæsar Augustus that "all the world should be taxed," the Virgin and Joseph having come out of Galilee to Judea to be inscribed for the taxation, found Bethlehem so full of people, who had arrived from all parts of the world, that they wandered about for nine days, without finding admittance in any house or tavern, and on the ninth day took shelter in a manger, where the Saviour was born. For eight days, this wandering of the Holy Family to the different *Posadas* is represented, and seems more intended for an amusement to the children, than anything serious. We went to the Marquesa's at eight o'clock, and about nine the ceremony commenced. A lighted taper was put into the hand of each lady, and a procession was formed, two by two, which marched all through the house; the corridors and walls of which were all decorated with evergreens and lamps; the

whole party singing the Litanies. K—— walked with the Dowager Marquesa ; and a group of little children, dressed as angels, joined the procession. They wore little robes of silver or gold lama, plumes of white feathers, and a profusion of fine diamonds and pearls, in bandeaux, brooches and necklaces, white gauze wings, and white satin shoes, embroidered in gold.

At last the procession drew up before a door, and a shower of fireworks was sent flying over our heads, I suppose to represent the descent of the angels ; for a group of ladies appeared, dressed to represent the shepherds who watched their flocks by night upon the plains of Bethlehem. Then voices, supposed to be those of Mary and Joseph, struck up a hymn, in which they begged for admittance ; saying that the night was cold and dark, that the wind blew hard, and that they prayed for a night's shelter. A chorus of voices from within, refused admittance. Again those without entreated shelter, and at length declared that she at the door who thus wandered in the night, and had not where to lay her head, was the Queen of Heaven ! At this name, the doors were thrown wide open, and the Holy Family entered singing. The scene within was very pretty ; a *nacimiento*. Platforms going all round the room, were covered with moss, on which were disposed groups of wax figures, generally representing passages from different parts of the New Testament, though sometimes they begin with Adam and Eve in paradise. There was the Annunciation — the Salutation of Mary to Elizabeth — the Wise Men of the East —

the Shepherds — the Flight into Egypt. There were green trees and fruit trees, and little fountains that cast up fairy columns of water, and flocks of sheep, and a little cradle in which to lay the Infant Christ. One of the angels held a waxen baby in her arms. The whole was lighted very brilliantly, and ornamented with flowers and garlands. A padre took the baby from the angel, and placed it in the cradle, and the posada was completed.

We then returned to the drawingroom — angels, shepherds and all, and danced till supper time. The supper was a show for sweetmeats and cakes.

To-day, with the exception of there being service in all the churches, Christmas is not kept in any remarkable way. We are spending this evening alone, and very quietly. To-morrow we have a *soirée*. I have letters from C——n, from Cuernavaca, delighted with the beauties of *tierra caliente*, and living amongst roses and orange trees. I hope that in January we shall be able to go there, in case anything should occur to induce us to leave Mexico before next winter.

27th. — We had a very crowded party last evening, I think the best we have had yet, a fact which I mention, because I triumph in my opinion that these weekly parties would succeed in Mexico having proved correct.

I have lately been engaged in search of a *cook*, with as much pertinacity as Japhet in search of his father, and with as little success as he had in his preliminary inquiries. One, a Frenchman, I found out had been tried for murder — another was said to be

deranged — a third, who announced himself as the greatest *artiste* who had yet condescended to visit Mexico, demanded a salary which he considered suitable to his abilities. I tried a female Mexican, in spite of her flowing hair. She seemed a decent woman and tolerable cook — and although our French housekeeper and prime minister had deserted us at our utmost need, we ventured to leave the house, and to spend the day at Tacubaya. On our return, found the whole establishment unable to stand ! Cook tipsy — soldiers ditto — galopine slightly intoxicated — in short, the house taking care of itself — no *standing force* but the coachman and footman, who have been with us some time, and appear to be excellent servants. I am however promised a good Mexican housekeeper, and trust that some order will be established under her government ; also a Chinese cook, with a *celestial* character. . . .

Letters from Spain, announcing the speedy arrival of a Secretary of Legation and another attaché.

1st January, 1841. — A happy New Year to all ! We began it by attending early mass in San Francisco, about the cleanest church in Mexico, and most frequented by the better classes. There you may have the good fortune to place yourself between two well-dressed women, but you are equally likely to find your neighbor a beggar with a blanket ; besides the floor is nearly as dirty as that of the Cathedral. This dirtiness is certainly one of the greatest drawbacks to human felicity in this beautiful country, degrading the noble edifices dedicated to the worship of God, destroying the beautiful works destined for the ben-

effit of his creatures. The streets, the churches, the theatres, the market-place, the people, all are contaminated by this evil. The market-place is indeed full of flowers and green branches and garlands—but those who sell the flowers and weave the wreaths are so dirty, that the effect of what would otherwise be the prettiest possible picture, is completely destroyed. In the theatre, there is a series of suffocating odors, especially in the dimly-lighted corridors, which is anything but agreeable. The custom of kneeling on the floor in church, seems fitting and devout, but there surely can be no reason why the floor of a sacred building should not be kept scrupulously clean, or why the lower classes should not be obliged to dress themselves with common decency. Those who are unable to do so, though probably there are not half a dozen people in Mexico who do not wear rags merely from indolence, should certainly have a place set apart for them, in which case this air of squalid poverty would no doubt disappear. On occasion of any peculiar fête, the church is washed and beggars are excluded, and then indeed these noble edifices seem fitting temples wherein to worship the Most High.

On other days, in addition to the léperos, (especially in the cathedral) the Indian women are in the habit of bringing their babies and baskets of vegetables to church, and the babies on their part are in the habit of screaming, as babies will when they consider themselves neglected. This may be difficult to amend, the poor woman having come in from her village, and perforce brought her progeny with her ;

but the strong, stout man in rags, who prefers begging to working — the half-naked woman who would consider herself degraded by doing anything to better her condition, except asking for alms — the dogs which wander up and down during divine service, — all these might be brought to order by proper regulations.

Notwithstanding all these drawbacks, I have sometimes compared, in my own mind, the appearance of a fashionable London chapel with that of a Mexican church, on the occasion of a solemn fête, and the comparison is certainly in favor of the latter. The one, light, airy and gay, with its velvet-lined pews, its fashionable preacher, the ladies a little sleepy after the last night's opera, but dressed in the most elegant morning toilette, and casting furtive glances at Lady ——'s bonnet and feathers, and at Mrs. ——'s cashmere shawl or lovely ermine pelisse, and exchanging a few fashionable nothings at the door, as the footmen let down the steps of their gay equipages — the other, solemn, stately and gloomy, and showing no distinction of rank. The floor covered with kneeling figures — some enveloped in the reboso, others in the mantilla, and all alike devout, at least in outward seeming. No showy dress, or gay bonnet, or fashionable mantle to cause the eye of the poor to wander with envy or admiration. Apparently considering themselves alike in the sight of Heaven, the peasant and the Marquesa kneel side by side, with little distinction of dress; and all appear occupied with their own devotions, without observing either their neighbor's dress or degree of devoutness. Re-

ligious feeling may be equally strong in the frequenters of both places of worship ; but as long as we possess senses which can be affected by external objects, the probabilities of the most undivided devotional feeling are in favor of the latter. The eye will wander — the thoughts will follow where it leads. In the one case it rests on elegant forms and fashionable toilettes — in the other, it sees nothing but a mass of dark and kneeling figures, or a representation of holy and scriptural subjects.

However, one consequence of the exceeding dirtiness of the Mexican churches, and of the number of léperos who haunt them, as much in the way of their calling as from devotion, is that a great part of the principal families here, having oratorios in their houses, have engaged the services of a padre, and have mass at home. There is a small chapel in the house of General B——a, the handsomest house in Mexico, where there is a Virgin carved in wood, one of the most exquisite pieces of sculpture that can be seen. The face is more than angelic — it is divine ; but a divine nature, suffering mortal anguish.

27th. — On the first of February we hope to set off on an expedition to *tierra caliente*, from which C——n returned some time ago. We have, by good fortune, procured an excellent Mexican housekeeper, under whose auspices everything has assumed a very different aspect, and to whose care we can entrust the house when we go. Nothing remarkable has occurred here lately — the usual routine of riding on horseback, visiting in carriage, walking very rarely in the Alameda, driving in the Paséo, dining at Tacu-

baya, the three weekly soirées, varied by a diplomatic dinner in the house of the —— Minister, and by the dinner of the English club who met here yesterday — by a sale of books after dinner, in which the president of the society fined me five dollars for keeping a stupid old poem past the time, upon which I *moved* that the poem should be presented to me, which was carried *nem con*.

We have been strongly advised not to attempt this journey, and the stories of robbers and robberies, related by credible persons, are not encouraging. Robbers, bad roads, horrible heat, poisonous animals; many are the difficulties prognosticated to us. The season is already rather advanced, but it has been impossible for us to set off sooner. Our next letters will be written either during our journey, should we find the opportunity, or after our return.

LETTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

Leave Mexico — Cuernavaca — *Tierra Caliente* — *Atlacamulco* — Orange groves — Sugar cane — Annual produce — Will of Cortes — Description — Coffee plantation — Scorpions — List of venomous reptiles — *Acapansingo* — Doubts and difficulties — A decision.

ATLACAMULCO, February 2d.

A QUIET day in a hospitable country house, too sunny to go out, and nothing else to do, are temptations sufficient to induce me to sit down and give you an account of our proceedings during these last two days. Yesterday, the first of February, at four in the morning, very sleepy, we set off in the diligence which we had taken for ourselves; our sole luggage, two portmanteaus and a carpet bag; our dresses, dark strong calico gowns, large Panama hats, rebosos tied on like scarfs, and thick green barége veils. A government escort of four soldiers with a corporal, renewed four times, accompanied us as far as Cuernavaca, which is about eighteen leagues from Mexico, and the entrance as it were to *tierra caliente*. These are supposed sufficient to frighten away three times the number of robbers, whose daring, however, has got to such a height, that no diligence now arrives from Puebla without being robbed. Six robberies have happened there in the last fortnight, and the road to

Cuernavaca is said to be still more dangerous. We took chocolate before starting, and carried with us a basket of cold meat and wine, as there is nothing on the road that can be called an inn. When we set off it was cool, almost cold; the astral lamps were out, and the great solar lamp was not yet lighted.

“But soon, like lobster boiled, the morn,
From black to red began to turn.”

By the time we had reached San Agustin, where we changed horses, the sun had risen, enabling us to see all the horrors of the road, which after leaving that beautiful village with its trees and gardens, winds over the mountain, amongst great volcanic rocks, a toilsome ascent; and passes by the village of Ajusco, a miserable robbers' nest. Yet the view, as we looked back from this barren tract, while the sun was breaking over the summits of the mountains, was very grand, in its mixture of fertility and wildness, in its vast extent of plains and villages with their groves and gardens, and in its fine view of Mexico itself, white and glittering in the distance. The mountain of Ajusco, clothed with dark forests of pine, frowned on our right, and looked worthy of its brigand haunted reputation. At La Guarda, a collection of miserable huts, we changed horses, and declined some suspicious-looking frijoles in dirty saucers, which were offered to us; a proof both that we were young travellers in this country, and that we had not exhausted our basket of civilized provender.

The road wound through a succession of rocks and woods till we reached *Cruz del Marques* — the Marquis being of course Cortes, while the cross it is said, was planted there by him to mark the limits of his territory, or rather of that which the Indian Emperor had assigned him. About two o'clock, the heat became intense, and we began to see and to feel symptoms of our approach to *tierra caliente*.

We arrived at the Indian village of *Huichilaque*, which is rather pretty, with cane cottages and a good many flowering trees; and from the eminence on which it is situated, the *hot land* is visible.

The diligence now began galloping down the rocky and stony descent. The country looked even more arid than before; the vegetation more dried up. Not a tree — but here and there, at long intervals, a feathery cocoa or a palm, and occasionally some beautiful, unknown wild flowers. But the heat, the dust, the jolting! When at length we rattled through Cuernavaca, and stopped before the quiet-looking inn, it was with joy that we bade adieu, for some time at least, to all diligences, coaches and carriages; having to trust for the future to four-legged conveyances, which we can guide as we please.

Cuernavaca, (*cow's horn*) the ancient Quauhna-huac, was one of the thirty cities which Charles the Fifth gave to Cortes, and afterwards formed part of the estates of the Duke of Monteleon, representative of the family of Cortes, as Marquis of the Valley of Oajaca. It was celebrated by the ancient writers for its beauty, its delightful climate, and the strength of its situation; defended on one side by steep

mountains, and on the other by a precipitous ravine, through which ran a stream which the Spaniards crossed by means of two great trees that had thrown their branches across the barranca, and formed a natural bridge. It was the capital of the Tlahuica nation, and, after the conquest, Cortes built here a splendid palace, a church, and a convent of Franciscans, believing that he had laid the foundation of a great city. And in fact, its delicious climate, the abundance of the water, the minerals said to exist in the neighborhood, its fine trees, delicious fruits, and vicinity to the capital, all combined to render it a flourishing city. It is however a place of little importance, though so favored by nature ; and the conqueror's palace is a half-ruined barrack, though a most picturesque object, standing on a hill, behind which starts up the great white volcanoe. There are some good houses, and the remains of the church which Cortes built, celebrated for its bold arch ; but we were too tired to walk about much, and waited most anxiously for the arrival of horses and men from the sugar estate of Don Anselmo Zurutuza, at Atlacamulco, where we were to pass the night. The house where the diligence stopped was formerly remarkable for the fine garden attached to it, and belonged to a wealthy proprietor. We sat down amongst the fruit trees, by the side of a clear tank, and waited there till the arrival of our horses and guides. It was nearly dusk when they came — the sun had gone down, the evening was cool and agreeable, and after much kicking and spurring and loading of mules and barking of dogs, we set off over

hill and dale, through pretty wild scenery, as far as we could distinguish by the faint light, climbing hills and crossing streams for two leagues ; till at length the fierce fires, pouring from the sugar-oven chimneys of Atlacamulco, gave us notice that we were near our haven for the night. We galloped into the court-yard, amongst dogs and negroes and Indians, and were hospitably received by the administrador, (the agent.) Greatly were we divided between sleep and hunger ; but hunger gained the victory, and an immense smoking supper received our most distinguished attention.

This morning, after a refreshing sleep, we rose and dressed at eight o'clock — late hours for *tierra caliente* — and then went out into the coffee plantation and orange walk. Anything so lovely ! The orange trees were covered with their golden fruit and fragrant blossom ; the lemon trees, bending over, formed a natural arch, which the sun could not pierce. We laid ourselves down on the soft grass, contrasting this day with the preceding. The air was soft and balmy, and actually heavy with the fragrance of the orange blossom and starry jasmine. All round the orchard ran streams of the most delicious clear water, trickling with sweet music, and now and then a little cardinal, like a bright red ruby, would perch on the trees. We pulled bouquets of orange blossom, jasmine, lilies, double red roses, and lemon leaves, and wished we could have transported them to you, to those lands, where winter is now wrapping the world in his white winding-sheet.

The gardener, or coffee-planter — such a gardener ! — Don Juan by name, with an immense black beard, Mexican hat, and military sash of crimson silk, came to offer us some orangeade ; and having sent to the house for sugar and tumblers, pulled the oranges from the trees, and drew the water from a clear tank overshadowed by blossoming branches, and cold as though it had been iced. There certainly is no tree more beautiful than the orange, with its golden fruit, shining green leaves and lovely white blossom with so delicious a fragrance. We felt this morning as if Atlacamilco was an earthly paradise.

It belongs in fact to the Duke of Monteleone, and is let by his agent, Don Lucas Alaman, to Señor Zurutuza. Its average annual produce of sugar is about thirty thousand *arrobas*, (an *arroba* containing twenty-five pounds.) The sugar cane was unknown to the ancient Mexicans, who made syrup of honey, and also from the maguey, and sugar from the stalk of maize. The sugar cane was introduced by the Spaniards from the Canary Islands to Santo Domingo, from whence it passed to Cuba and Mexico. The first sugar canes were planted in 1520, by Don Pedro de Atienza. The first cylinders were constructed by Gonzalo de Velosa, and the first sugar mills built by the Spaniards at that time were worked by hydraulic wheels and not by horses. M. de Humboldt, who examined the will of Cortes, informs us that the conqueror had left sugar plantations near Cuyoacan, in the valley of Mexico, where now, owing, it is supposed, to the cutting down of the trees, the cold is too great for sugar cane or any other tropical

production to thrive. There are few negroes on these sugar plantations. Their numbers have not increased since their introduction. We observed but one old negro, said to be upwards of a hundred, who was working in the court-yard as we passed; the generality of the workmen are Indians.

As for the interior of these haciendas, they are all pretty much alike, so far as we have seen; a great stone building, which is neither farm nor country house, (according to our notions) but has a character peculiar to itself—solid enough to stand a siege, with floors of painted brick, large deal tables, wooden benches, painted chairs and whitewashed walls; one or two painted or iron bedsteads, only put up when wanted; numberless empty rooms; kitchen and out-houses; the court-yard a great square, round which stand the house for boiling the sugar, whose furnaces blaze day and night; the house, with machinery for extracting the juice from the cane, the refining rooms, the places where it is dried, &c., all on a large scale. If the hacienda is, as here, a coffee plantation also, then there is the great mill for separating the beans from the chaff, and sometimes also there are buildings where they make brandy. Here there are four hundred men employed, exclusive of boys, one hundred horses, and a number of mules. The property is generally very extensive, containing the fields of sugar cane, plains for cattle, and the pretty plantations of coffee, so green and spring-like, this one containing upwards of fifty thousand young plants, all fresh and vigorous, besides a great deal of uncultivated ground, abandoned to the deer and hares and

quails, of which there are great abundance. For four months in the year, *tierra caliente* must be a Paradise, and it has the advantage over the coasts, in being quite free from yellow fever. But the heat in summer, and the number of poisonous insects, are great drawbacks. Of these, the *alacrans*, or scorpions, which haunt all the houses, are amongst the worst. Their bite is poisonous, and to a child, deadly, which is one of the many reasons why these estates are left entirely to the charge of an agent, and though visited occasionally by the proprietor, rarely lived in by the family. The effects are more or less violent in different constitutions. Some persons will remain for eight days in convulsions, foaming at the mouth, and the stomach swelled, as if by dropsy; others, by immediate remedies, do not suffer much. The chief cures are brandy, taken in sufficient quantities to stupefy the patient, guyacum and boiled silk, which last is considered most efficacious. In Durango they are particularly numerous and venomous, so that a reward is given for so many *head* of scorpions to the boys there, to encourage them to destroy them. The Señora —, who lives there, feels no inconvenience from their bite, but the scorpion who bites her immediately dies! It is pretended that they prefer dark people to fair, which is to suppose them very discriminating. Though as yet there have been few seen in the houses, I must confess that we feel rather uneasy at night, and scrupulously examine our beds and their environs, before venturing to go to sleep. The walls being purposely whitewashed, it is not difficult to detect them;

but where the roofs are formed of beams, they are very apt to drop through.

There are other venomous reptiles, for whose sting there is no remedy, and if you would like to have a list of these interesting creatures, according to the names by which they are known in these parts, I can furnish you with one from the best authority. These, however, are generally to be found about out-houses, and only occasionally visit your apartments. There is the *chicaclina*, a striped viper, of beautiful colors — the *coralillo*, a viper of a coral color, with a black head — the *vinagrillo*, an animal like a large cricket. You can discover it, when in the room, by its strong smell of vinegar. It is orange-colored, and taps upon the person whom it crawls over, without giving them any pain, but leaving a long train of deadly poison — I have fancied that I smelt vinegar in every room since hearing this — the *salamanquesa*, whose bite is fatal. It is shaped like a lizard — the *eslaboncillo*, which throws itself upon you, and if prevented from biting you, dies of spite — the *cencoatl*, which has five feet, and shines in the dark; so that fortunately a warning is given of the vicinity of these animals in different ways; in some by the odor they exhale, in some by the light they emit, and in others, like the rattlesnake, by the sound they give out.

Then there is a beautiful black and red spider, called the *chinclaquili*, whose sting sends a pain through all your bones; the only cure for which is to be shut up for several days in a room thick with smoke. There are also the tarantula and casam-

pulga spiders. Of the first, which is a shocking looking soft fat creature, covered with dark hair, it is said, that the horse which treads on it, instantly loses its hoof — but this wants confirmation. Of the scorpions, the small yellowish-colored ones are the most dangerous, and it is pretended that their bite is most to be apprehended at midday. The workmen occasionally eat them, after pulling out the sting. The flesh of the viper is also eaten roasted, as a remedy against eruptions of the skin. Methinks the remedy is worse than the disease. . . .

But to banish this *creeping* subject, which seems not at all in unison with the lovely scenes that surround us ; an Eden where no serpent should enter — we have been riding this evening to a beautiful little Indian village called *Acapansingo*, than which I never beheld anything prettier in its way. Some few houses there are of stone, but the generality are of cane, and each cottage is surrounded by its fruit trees, and by others covered with lilac or white blossoms, and twined with creepers. The lanes or streets of the village are cleanly swept, and shaded by the blossoming branches that overhang them ; while every now and then they are crossed by little streams of the purest water. I think I never knew what really delicious water was till I came here. The Indians, both men and women, looked clean, and altogether this is the prettiest Indian village we have yet seen.

As we are very anxious to visit the celebrated cave of Cacaamilpa, near the city of Cautlamilpa, and also to see as much of tierra caliente as possible, we have determined, though with regret, to leave

our pleasant quarters at Atlacamuleo to-morrow morning, at two o'clock, A. M. As there are no inns, we are furnished with letters of recommendation to the proprietors of the chief haciendas in these parts. Formerly, there was so much hospitality here that an annual sum (three thousand dollars it is said) was assigned by the proprietors to their agents, for the reception of travellers, whether rich or poor, and whether recommended or not. . . .

Our plan of visiting the cave has been nearly frustrated, by the arrival of General C——s, a neighboring proprietor, who assured us that we were going to undertake an impossibility ; that the barrancas, by which we must pass to arrive at the cave, were impassable for women, the mountain paths being so steep and perpendicular that men and horses had frequently fallen backwards in the ascent, or been plunged forward over the precipices, in attempting to descend. We were in despair, when it was suggested that there was another, though much longer road to the cave, by which we might ride ; and though our time is at present very precious, we were too glad to agree to this compromise.

C——n and A—— have returned from a shooting expedition, in which they have not been very successful ; and though I have only recounted to you the beginning of our adventures, I must stop here, and take a few hours' rest before we set off on our *matinal* expedition.

LETTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

Leave *Atlacamulco* — Assemble by star-light — Balmy atmosphere — Flowers and trees of the tropics — The formidable *barrancas* — Breakfast under the trees — Force of the sun — *Meacatlan* — Hospitality — Profitable estate — Leave *Meacatlan* — Beautiful village — Musical bells — Ride by moonlight — Sugar fires — *Cocoyotla* — Old gentleman — Supper — Orange trees and cocoas — Delicious water — Sugar estates — A scorpion — Set off for the cave — Morning ride — Dangerous path.

COCOYOTLA, 5th.

On the morning of the third of February, we rose about half past two, and a little after three, by the light of the stars and the blaze of the sugar fires, our whole party were assembled on horseback in the court-yard. We were about twelve in number. Don Juan, the coffee planter, and Don Pedro, a friend of his, were deputed by the agent to act as our guides. Four or five well-armed *mozos*, farm-servants, were our escort, together with our Mexican boy; and we had mules to carry our luggage, which was compressed into the smallest possible compass. The morning was perfectly enchanting, and the air like balm, when we set off by this uncertain light; not on roads, (much to our satisfaction) but through fields, and over streams, up hills and down into valleys, climbing among stones, the horses picking their

way like goats. I certainly never felt or imagined such an atmosphere. The mere inhaling it was sufficient pleasure.

When the light gradually began to dawn, so that we could discern each other's faces, and make sure that we were not a party of shadows, for besides the obscurity, a mixture of sleepiness and placid delight had hitherto kept us all silent, we looked round on the landscape, as little by little it assumed form and consistency. The fires from the hacienda were still visible, but growing pale in the beams of morning, vanishing like false visions from before the holy light of truth. As we rode along, we found that the scenery on the hilly parts, was generally bleak and sterile, the grass dried up, and very little vegetation ; but wherever we arrived at a valley sheltered from the sun's rays, there we found a little rivulet trickling through it, with water like liquid diamonds, bathing the trees and the flowers — the loveliest blossoming trees, mingled with bananas, oranges and lemons, and interspersed with bright flowers, forming a natural garden and orchard.

One tree, with no leaves on it, is covered with white starry flowers, and looks at a distance as if it had been covered with snow, which had melted off the branches, leaving only occasional white tufts. Another is bending with lilac blossoms, which hang in graceful clusters — another with flowers like yellow balls. Then there are scarlet wild flowers, that seem as if they were made of wax or shining coral, and quantities of white jasmine, trailing on the grass, and throwing itself over the branches of the

trees. There is one beautiful tree, with flowers like immense white lilies, and buds that look like shut lily blossoms in white wax.

Leaving these beautiful and fertile lands that adorn the slopes and bases of the hills, you mount again up the steep paths, and again you find the grass dried up, and no vegetation but stunted nopals or miserable-looking blue-green magueys. Yet sometimes in the most desert spot, a little sheltered by a projecting hill, you come upon the most beautiful tree, bending with rich blossoms, standing all alone, as if through ambition it had deserted its lowly sisters in the valley, and stood in its exalted station, solitary and companionless.

As for the names of these tropical trees, they are almost all Indian, and it is only *botanically* that they can be properly distinguished. There is the *floripundio*, with white odoriferous flowers hanging like bells from its branches, with large pointed, pale-green leaves — the *yollojochitl*, signifying flower of the heart, like white stars with yellow hearts, which when shut have the form of one, and the fragrance of which is delicious — the *izgujochitl*, whose flowers look like small white musk roses — another with a long Indian name, which means the flower of the raven, and is white, red and yellow. The Indians use it to adorn their altars, and it is very fragrant as well as beautiful.

After six hours good riding, our guides pointed out to us the formidable barrancas at some distance, and expressed their opinion, that with great caution, our horses being very sure-footed, we might venture to

pass them, by which means we should save three leagues, and be enabled to reach an hacienda within six leagues of the cave that night ; and after some deliberation, it was agreed that the attempt should be made. These barrancas, (the word literally means a ravine or mountain gully) are two mountains, one behind the other, which it is necessary to cross by a narrow path, that looks like a road for goats. We began the ascent in silence, and some fear, one by one, till the horses were nearly perpendicular. It lasted about twenty minutes ; and we then began to descend slowly, certainly not without some danger of being thrown over our horses' heads. However, we arrived in safety at the end of the first mountain, and this being accomplished, drew up to rest our horses and mules beside a beautiful clear stream, bordered by flowering trees. Here some clear-headed individual of the party proposed that we should open our hamper, containing cold chicken, hard eggs, sherry, &c. ; observing, that it was time to be hungry. His suggestion was agreed to without a dissenting voice, and a napkin being spread under a shady tree, no time was lost in proving the truth of his observation. A very ingenious contrivance for making a wine-glass, by washing an egg-shell in the stream, is worthy of record. When we had demolished the cold chicken, the *mozos* surrounded the cold meat, and after gathering branches covered with beautiful flowers, with which we ornamented our horses' heads and our own hats, we prepared to ascend the second mountain. This is as steep, or nearly as steep as the first ; but we were already confident in the sure-footedness of

our horses, and even able to admire the view as we ascended single file. After much rain, this path must of course be completely impassable. The day had now become oppressively warm, though it was not later than eleven o'clock ; and having passed the hills, we came to a dusty high road, which, about twelve, brought us to the hacienda of Meacatlan, belonging to the family of Perez Palacio. We were overtaken on the road by the eldest son of the proprietor, who cordially invited us in, and introduced us to the ladies of his family, and to his father, a fine, noble-looking old gentleman. As we were excessively tired, hot and dusty, we were very glad to spend a few hours here during the heat of the sun ; and after joining the family at breakfast, consisting of the most extraordinary variety of excellent dishes, with a profusion of fine fruits and curious sweetmeats, (amongst which was that ethereal looking production, called *angel's hair*, *cabello de angel*,) we were glad to lie down and rest till four o'clock.

This hacienda is very productive and valuable, and has a silver mine on it.

There is also every variety of fine fruit, especially the largest *cedrats* I ever saw ; which, although they have not a great deal of flavor, are very refreshing. With all their beauty and fertility, there is something very lonely in a residence on these estates, which are so entirely shut out of the world ; not so much for the proprietors themselves, who are occupied in the care of their interests, but for the female part of the family.

We left this hospitable mansion about four o'clock,

rested and refreshed, the proprietor giving K—— a horse of his, instead of her own, which was tired. The sun was still powerful, when we and our train remounted, but the evening had become delightfully cool, by the time that we had reached the beautiful village of San Francisco de Tetecala, lying amongst wooded hills, its white houses gleaming out from amidst the orange trees, with a small river crossed by bridges running through it. Many of the houses were tolerably large and well built. It was a fête day, and the musical bells ringing merrily ; the people were clean and well dressed, and were assembled in crowds in an enclosure, looking at a bull-fight, which must be hot work in this climate, both for man and beast.

But when the moon rose serenely, and without a cloud, and a soft breeze, fragrant with orange blossom, blew gently over the trees, I felt as if we might have rode on forever without fatigue, and in a state of the most perfect enjoyment. It were hard to say whether the first soft breath of morning, or the languishing and yet more fragrant airs of evening were most enchanting. Sometimes we passed through a village of scattered Indian huts, with little fires of sticks lighted in their courts, glowing on the bronze faces of the women and children ; and at the sound of our horses' hoofs, a chorus of dogs, yelping with most discordant fury, would give us loud notice of their total disapprobation of all night-travellers. Sometimes a decided smell of boiled sugar was mingled with the fragrance of the orange blossom and jasmine ; reminding us of those happy days of yore,

when the housekeeper, in all her glory, was engaged in making her annual stock of jellies and jams.

Once we were obliged to dismount, that our horses might make an *ugly leap* over a great ditch guarded by thorny bushes, and amongst trees where the moon gave us no light.

About ten o'clock, symptoms of weariness began to break out amongst us, spite of moon-beams and orange-buds ; when down in a valley we saw the sugar fires of *Cocoyotla*, the hacienda to which we trusted for our next place of shelter, darting out their fierce red tongues amongst the trees. We knocked for admittance at the great gate, and it was some time before the people within would undo the fastenings, which they did with great caution, and after carefully reconnoitring us ; afterwards giving for excuse, that a party of thirty robbers had passed by the night before, and that they thought we might have been some of these *night-errants*. We sent in our credentials to the proprietor, an old gentleman married to a young wife, who, living on the road to the cave, is by no means pleased at his house being turned into a *posada* for all and sundry, and complained bitterly of a party of Englishmen who had passed by some time before, "and the only *Spanish* word they could say, was *Vater*, by which they meant *Agua*, Caramba !" However, he was very hospitable to us, and pressed us to remain there the following day, and rest ourselves and our horses after our fourteen leagues march, previous to going on to the cave.

A very good supper and a very sound sleep were

refreshing, and the whole of the next day we spent in wandering about or sitting lazily amongst the magnificent orange trees and cocoas of this fine hacienda. Here the orange trees are the loftiest we had yet seen ; long ranges of noble trees, loaded with fruit and flowers. At the back of the house is a small grove of cocoas, and a clear running stream passing through beautiful flowers, and refreshing everything in its course. Indeed, all through *tierra caliente*, except on the barren hills, there is a profusion of the most delicious water, here at once a necessity and a luxury.

These sugar estates are under high cultivation, the crops abundant, the water always more than sufficient both for the purposes of irrigation and for machinery, which A—— considers equal to anything he has seen in Jamaica. They produce annually from thirty to fifty thousand *arrobas* of sugar. The laborers are free Indians, and are paid from two and a half to six and a half reals per day. I believe that about one hundred and fifty are sufficient for working on a large estate. Bountiful nature, walking on the traces of civil war, fills up the ravages caused by sanguinary revolutions, and these estates in the valley of Cuernavaca, which have so frequently been theatres of bloodshed, and have so often changed proprietors, remain in themselves as fertile and productive as ever. 4

In the evening we visited the *trapiche*, as they call the sugar-works, the sugar-boilers, warehouses, store-rooms and engines. The heat is so intense among these great boilers, that we could not endure it for

more than a few minutes, and pitied the men who have to spend their lives in this work. They make *panoja* on this estate, cakes of coarse sugar, which the common people prefer to the refined sugar.

Just as we were preparing to retire for the night, an animal on the wall attracted our attention, close by K——'s bed — and, gentle reader ! it was a scorpion ! We gave a simultaneous cry, which brought Señor —— into the room, who laughed at our fears, and killed our foe ; when lo ! just as our fright had passed away, another, a yellowish-colored, venomous-looking creature, appeared stealing along the wall. The lady of the house came this time, and ordered the room and the beds to be searched. No more could be discovered, but it was difficult to sleep in peace after such an apparition.

At three the next morning we rose, and set off by moon and starlight for the cave. The morning was lovely as usual, and quite cool. We passed a great deal of barren and hilly road, till we reached some plains, where we had a delightful gallop, and arrived early at a small rancho, or farm house, where we were to procure guides for the cave. Here we added four Indians, and the master of the house, *Benito*, to our party, which was afterwards increased by numbers of men and boys, till we formed a perfect regiment. This little rancho, with its small garden, was very clean and neat. The woman of the house told us she had seen no ladies since an English *Ministra* had slept there two nights. We concluded that this must have been Mrs. Ashburnham, who spent two days in exploring the cave. We continued our ride

over loose stones, and dry, rocky hills, where, were the horses not sure-footed, and used to climb, the riders' necks would no doubt suffer. Witlin about a quarter of a mile of the cave, after leaving on our right the pretty village of Cautlamilpas, we found ourselves in a place which I consider much more dangerous than even the barrancas near *Meacatlan*; a narrow path, overhanging a steep precipice, and bordering a perpendicular hill, with just room for the horses feet, affording the comfortable assurance that one false step would precipitate you to the bottom. I confess to having held my breath, as one by one, and step by step, no one looking to the right or the left, our gowns occasionally catching on a bush, with our whole train we wound slowly down this narrow descent. Arrived near the mouth of the cave, we dismounted, and climbed our way among stones and gravel to the great mountain opening. But an account of the cave itself must be reserved till our return to Atlacamulco.

LETTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

Cave of *Cacahuamilpa* — Superstition — Long-bearded goat — Portal — Vestibule — Fantastic forms — Breakfast — Pine torches — Noble hall — Stalactites and stalagmites — Egyptian pyramids — Double gallery — Wonderful formations — Corridor — Frozen landscape — Amphitheatre — World in chaos — Skeleton — Wax lights — Hall of angels — Return — Distant light — Indian — Alcalde — *Cautlamilpas* — Rancho — Return to Co-coyotla — Chapel — Meacatlan — Eclipse of the moon — Benighted travellers — Indian village — *El Puente* — Return to *Atlacamulco*.

ATLACAMULCO, 7th.

THE cave of *Cacahuamilpa*, whose actual wonders equal the fabled descriptions of the palaces of Genii, was, until lately, known to the Indians alone, or if the Spaniards formerly knew anything about it, its existence was forgotten amongst them. But although in former days it may have been used as a place of worship, a superstitious fear prevented the more modern Indians from exploring its shining recesses, for here it was firmly believed, the evil spirit had his dwelling, and in the form of a goat, with long beard and horns, guarded the entrance of the cavern. The few who ventured there and beheld this apparition, brought back strange tales to their credulous companions, and even the neighborhood of the enchanted cave was avoided, especially at night-fall.

The chain of mountains, into whose bosom it leads,

is bleak and bare, but the ravine below is refreshed by a rapid stream, that forms small waterfalls as it tumbles over the rocks, and is bordered by green and flowering trees. Amongst these, is one with a smooth, satin-like bark, of a pale golden color, whose roots have something snakish and witch-like in their appearance, intertwining with each other, grappling as it were with the hard rock, and stretching out to the most extraordinary distance.

We arrived at the entrance of the cave, a superb portal, upwards of seventy feet high, and one hundred and fifty wide, according to the computation of a learned traveller; the rocks which support the great arch so symmetrically disposed, as to resemble a work of art. The sun was already high in the heavens, shining with intense brightness on the wild scenery that surrounded us, the rocks and trees and rushing waters; — a sensation of awe came over us, as we stood at the mouth of the cave, and turning from day to night, strained our eyes to look down a deep descent into a gigantic vaulted hall, faintly lighted by the red embers of a fire which the Indians had kindled near the entrance. We made our way down a declivity, of it may be one hundred and fifty feet, surrounded by blocks of stone and rock, and remained lost in astonishment at finding ourselves in this gloomy subterranean palace, surrounded by the most extraordinary, gigantic and mysterious forms, which it is scarcely possible to believe are the fantastic productions of the water which constantly trickles from the roof.

I am shocked to confess it — I would prefer pass-

ing it over — but we had tasted nothing that morning — and we had rode for eight hours, and were dying of hunger ! Moreover we travelled with a cook, a very tolerable native artist, but without sentiment — his heart in his stew-pan ; and he, without the least compunction had begun his frying and broiling operations in what seemed the very vestibule of Pharaoh's palace. Our own *mozos* and our Indian guides were assisting his operations with the utmost zeal ; and in a few minutes, some sitting round the fire, and others upon broken pyramids, we refreshed ourselves with fried chicken, bread and hard eggs, before proceeding farther on our exploring expedition. Unromantic as this proceeding was, we looked, Indians and all, rather awful with no other light than the ruddy glare of the fire, flickering upon the strange, gigantic forms in that vast labyrinth ; and as to what we felt, our valor and strength of mind were increased sevenfold.

Twenty-four huge pine torches were then lighted, each man carrying one. To K—— and me were given lighted wax candles, in case by accident any one should go astray from his companions, and lose his way, as would too certainly happen, in the different windings and galleries and compartments of the cave, and be alone in the darkness ! We walked on, in awe and wonder ; the guides lighting up the sides of the cavern with their torches. Unfortunately, it is indescribable ; as in the fantastic forms of the clouds, every one sees some different creation of his fancy in these stupendous masses. It is said that the first *sala*, for travellers have pretended to divide

it into halls, and a very little imagination may do so, is about two hundred feet long, one hundred and seventy wide, and one hundred and fifty in height ; a noble apartment. The walls are shaded with different colors of green and orange ; great sheets of stalactites hang from the roof ; and white phantoms, palm trees, lofty pillars, pyramids, porches, and a thousand other illusions surround us on all sides. One figure, concerning which all agree, is a long-haired goat, the Evil One in that form. But some one has broken the head, perhaps to show the powerlessness of the enchanted guardian of the cave. Some say that there are no living animals here, but there is no doubt that there are bats ; and an exploring party, who passed the night here, not only heard the hissing of the rattlesnake, but were startled by the apparition of a fierce leopard, whose loud roarings were echoed amongst the vaults, and who, after gazing at them by the light of the torches, stalked majestically back into the darkness.

We passed on into the second *sala*, collecting as we went fragments of the shining stones, our awe and astonishment increasing at every step. Sometimes we seemed to be in a subterranean Egyptian temple. The architecture was decidedly Egyptian, and the strange forms of the animals resembled those of the uncouth Egyptian idols ; which, together with the pyramids and obelisks, made me think that perhaps that ancient people took the idea of their architecture and of many of their strange shapes from some natural cave of this description ; just as nature herself suggested the idea of the beautiful Corinthian pillar.

Again, we seemed to enter a tract of country which had been petrified. Fountains of congealed water, trees hung with frozen moss, pillars covered with gigantic acanthus leaves, pyramids of ninety feet high losing their lofty heads in the darkness of the vault, and looking like works of the Pre-Adamites — yet no Being but He who inhabits eternity could have created them. This second hall, as lofty as the other, may be nearly four hundred feet in length.

We then passed into a sort of double gallery, separated by enormous pyramidal formations ; *stalagmites*, those which are formed by water dropping on the earth. The ground was damp, and occasionally great drops trickled on our heads from the vaults above. Here Gothic shrines, odd figures ; some that look like mummies, others like old men with long beards, appal us like figures that we see in some wild dream. These are intermingled with pyramids, obelisks, baths that seem made of the purest alabaster, &c. A number of small round balls, petrifications of a dead white, lie about here, forming little hollows in the ground. Here the cave is very wide — about two hundred feet, it is said.

When we left this double gallery, we came to another vast corridor, supported by lofty pillars, covered with creeping plants ; but especially with a row of the most gigantic cauliflowers, each leaf delicately chiseled, and looking like a fitting food for the colossal dwellers of the cavern. But to attempt anything like a regular description, is out of the question. We gave ourselves up to admiration, as our torches flashed upon the masses of rock, the hills crowned with pyra-

mids, the congealed torrents that seem to belong to winter at the north pole, and the lofty Doric columns that bring us back to the pure skies of Greece. But amongst all these curious *accidents* produced by water, none is more curiously exquisite than an amphitheatre, with regular benches, surmounted by a great organ, whose pipes, when struck, give forth a deep sound. It is really difficult not to believe that some gigantic race once amused themselves in these petrified solitudes ; or that we have not invaded the sanctuary of some mysterious and superhuman beings. It is said that this cavern has been explored for four leagues, and yet that no exit has been discovered. As for us, I do not know how far we went. Our guides said a league. It seemed impossible to think of time, when we looked at these great masses, formed drop by drop, slowly and rarely and at distant intervals falling, and looked back upon the ages that must have elapsed since these gigantic formations began.

At length, on account of the loose stones, the water, and the masses of crystal rock that we had to climb over, our guides strongly recommended us to return. It was difficult to turn away our eyes from the great unformed masses that now seemed to fill the cave as far as the eye could reach. It looked like the world in chaos — nature's vast work-shop, from which she drew the materials which her hand was to reduce to form and order. We retraced our steps slowly and lingeringly through these subterranean palaces, feeling that one day was not nearly sufficient to explore them, yet thankful that we had

not left the country without seeing them. The skeleton of a man was discovered here by some travellers, lying on his side, the head nearly covered with crystallization. He had probably entered these labyrinths alone, either from rash curiosity or to escape from pursuit ; lost his way and perished from hunger. Indeed, to find the way back to the entrance of the cave is nearly impossible, without some clue to guide the steps amongst these winding galleries, halls, and issues, and entries, and divided corridors.

Though there are some objects so striking that they may immediately be recognised, such as the amphitheatre for instance, there is a monotony even in the variety ; and I can imagine the unfortunate man wandering amongst obelisks and pyramids and alabaster baths and Grecian columns — amongst frozen torrents that could not assuage his thirst, and trees with marble fruit and foliage, and crystal vegetables that mocked his hunger ; and pale phantoms with long hair and figures in shrouds, that could not relieve his distress — and then his cries for help, where the voice gives out an echo, as if all the pale dwellers in the cave answered in mockery — and then, his torch becoming extinguished, and he lying down exhausted and in despair near some inhospitable marble porch, to die.

As we went along, our guides had climbed up and placed wax candles on the top of all the highest points, so that their pale glimmering light pointed out the way to us on our return. The Indians begged that they might be left there “on account of the Blessed Souls in Purgatory,” which was done. As

we returned, we saw one figure we had not observed before, which looks something like a woman mounted on an enormous goat. To one hall, on account of its beauty, some travellers have given the name of the "Hall of Angels." It is said, that by observation, the height of the stalagmites might determine the age of their formation, but where is the enterprising geologist who would shut himself up in these crystal solitudes sufficiently long for correct observation ?

I never saw or could have imagined so beautiful an effect as that of the daylight in the distance, entering by the mouth of the cave ; such a faint misty blue, contrasted with the fierce red light of the torches, and broken by the pillars through which its pale rays struggled. It looked so pure and holy, that it seemed like the light from an angel's wings at the portals of the "*città dolente*." What would that poor traveller have given to have seen its friendly rays ! After climbing out and leaving the damp, cool subterraneous air, the atmosphere felt dry and warm, as we sat down to rest at the mouth of the cavern, surrounded by our Indian torch-bearers. Truly, nature is no coquette. She adorns herself with greater riches in the darkest mountain cave, than on the highest mountain top.

We were sitting in thoughtful silence, ourselves, Indians and all in a circle, when we saw, stumping down the hill, in great haste, and apparently in great wrath, an Indian alcalde, with a thick staff in his hand, at whose approach the Indians looked awe-struck. He carried in his brown hand a large letter,

on which was written in great type ; “ *Al Señor Dominante de esta caravana de gente.* ” “ To the Commander of this caravan of people ! ” This missive set forth that the justice of peace of the city of Cuautla Amilpas, begged to know by what right, by whose authority, and with what intentions, we had entered this cave, without permission from the government ; and desired the “ Señor Dominante,” to appear forthwith before the said justice, for contempt of his authority. The spelling of the letter was too amusing. The Indians looked very much alarmed, and when they saw us laugh, still more astonished. C——n wrote with a pencil in answer to the summons, that he was the Spanish Minister, and wished good day to the alcalde, who plodded up the hill again, very ill pleased.

We now took leave of this prodigious subterranean palace, and again put ourselves *en route*. Once more we wound our way round the brink of the precipice, and this time it was more dangerous for us than before, for we rode on the side next it, our gowns overhanging the brink, and if caught by a branch there, might have been dragged over. Our two guides afterwards said that if alone, they would have dismounted ; but that as the ladies said nothing, they did not like to propose it.

Some day, no doubt, this cave will become a show-place, and measures will be taken to render the approach to it less dangerous ; but as yet, one of its charms consists in its being unhackneyed. For, long after, its recollection rests upon the mind, like a marble dream. But like Niagara, it cannot be de-

scribed ; perhaps even it is more difficult to give an idea of this underground creation, than of the emperor of cataracts ; for there is nothing with which the cave can be compared.

Meanwhile, we had rather a disagreeable ride, in all the force of the sun's last rays, back to the rancho. No one spoke — all our thoughts were wandering amongst marble palaces, and uncouth, gigantic, half-human forms.

But our attention was again attracted by the sudden re-appearance of our friend, the alcalde, on the brow of the hill, looking considerably indignant. He came with a fresh summons from the judge of Cuautla Amilpas, which lay white and glittering in the valley below. C——n endeavored gravely to explain to him that the persons of ambassadors were not subject to such laws, which was Greek and Hebrew to him of the bronze countenance. “If it were a *Consul* indeed, there might be something in that.” At last our guide, the ranchero, promised to call upon the judge in the evening, and explain the matter to his satisfaction ; and again our alcalde departed upon his bootless errand — bootless in every sense, as he stalked down the hill with his bare bronze supporters. As we passed along, a parcel of soldiers in the village were assembled in haste, who struck up an imposing military air, to give us some idea of their importance.

Politically speaking, Cuautla Amilpas has been the theatre of important events. It was there that the curate Morelos shut himself up with a troop of insurgents, until the place being besieged by the Span-

iards under Calleja, and the party of Morelos driven to extremity for want of food, he secretly abandoned his position, drawing off his forces in the night.

When we arrived at the rancho, we found that a message had come from the judge, prohibiting Don Benito from accompanying strangers to the cave in future, which would be hard upon the old man, who makes a little money by occasionally guiding strangers there. C——n has therefore written on the subject to the prefect of the department.

In the cool of the evening, we had a delightful ride to Cocoyotla. The air was soft and fragrant — the bells of the villages were ringing amongst the trees, for every village, however poor, has at least one fine church, and all the bells in Mexico, whether in the city or in the villages, have a mellow and musical sound, owing, it is said, to the quantity of silver that enters into their composition.

It was late when we arrived at Cocoyotla, but we did not go to rest without visiting the beautiful chapel, which we had omitted to do on our last visit; it is very rich in gilding and ornaments, very large and in good taste. We supped, and threw ourselves down to rest for a few hours, and set off again at three o'clock, by the light of a full moon. Our greatest difficulty in these hurried marches is to get our things in and out of our portmanteaus, and to dress in time in the dark. No looking-glasses of course — we arrange our hair by our imagination. Everything gets broken as you may suppose; the mules that carry our trunks cantering up and down the hills to keep up with us, in most unequal measure.

The moon was still high, though pale, when the sun rose like a youthful monarch impatient to take the reins from the hands of a mild and dying queen. We had a delightful gallop, and soon left the fires of Cocoyotla far behind us. After riding six leagues, we arrived, at six in the morning, at the house of the Perez Palacios. We should have gone further while it was cool; but their hospitality, added to a severe fit of toothache which had attacked C——n, induced us to remain till four o'clock, during which time we improved our acquaintance with the family. How strange and even melancholy are those glimpses which travellers have of persons whom they will probably never meet again; with whom they form an intimacy which, owing to peculiar circumstances, seems very like friendship — much nearer it certainly than many a long acquaintanceship which we form in great cities, and where the parties go on *knowing each other* from year to year, and never exchanging more than a mere occasional and external civility.

It was four o'clock when we left Meacatlan, and we rode hard and fast till it grew nearly dark, for our intention was to return to our head-quarters at Atlacapulco that night, and we had a long journey before us, especially as it was decided that we should by no means attempt to recross the barrancas by night, which would have been too dangerous. Besides, an eclipse of the moon was predicted, and in fact, as we were riding across the fields, she appeared above the horizon, half in shadow, a curious and beautiful spectacle. But we should have been thankful for her entire beams, for after riding for hours, we dis-

covered that we had lost our way, and worse still, that there were no hopes of our finding it. Not a hut was in sight — darkness coming on — nothing but great plains and mountains to be distinguished, and nothing to be heard but bulls roaring round us. We went on, trusting to chance, and where chance would have led us, it is hard to say, but by good fortune, our advanced guard stumbled over two Indians, a man and boy, who agreed to guide us to their own village, but nowhere else.

After following them a long and weary way, all going at a pretty brisk trot, the barking of hundreds of dogs announced an Indian village, and by the faint light we could just distinguish the cane huts snugly seated amongst bananas, and with little enclosed gardens before each. Our cavalcade drew up before a hut, a sort of tavern or spirit-shop, where an old half-naked hag, the beau ideal of a witch, was distributing *fire-water* to the Indians, most of whom were already drunk. We got off our horses, and threw ourselves down on the ground, too tired to care what they were doing, and by some means a cup of bad chocolate was procured for us. We found that we had entirely lost our way, and it was therefore agreed that, instead of attempting to reach Atlacamulco that night, we should ride to the village of el Puente, where our conductors knew a Spanish family of bachelor brothers, who would be glad to *harbor* us for the remainder of the night. We then remounted, and set off somewhat refreshed by our rest and by the bad chocolate.

It was late at night when we entered el Puente,

after having crossed in pitch darkness a river so deep that the horses were nearly carried off their feet ; yet they were dancing in one place, playing cards on the ground in another — dogs were barking as usual, and candles lighted in the Indian huts. We were very well received by the Spaniards, who gave us supper, and made us take their room, all the rest of the party sleeping upon mattresses placed on the floor of a large empty apartment. We slept a few hours very soundly, rose before day-light, wakened the others, who, lying on the ground, rolled up in their sarapes, seemed to be sleeping for a wager, and re-mounted our horses, not sorry at the prospect of a day's rest at Atlacamulco. It was dark when we set off ; but the sun had risen and had lighted up the bright green fields of sugar cane, and the beautiful coffee plantations, that look like flowering myrtles, by the time we reached the hacienda of Señor Neri del Barrio, whose family is amongst the most distinguished of the old *Spanish Mexican* stock. We stopped to take a tumbler of milk fresh from the cow ; declined an invitation to go in, as we were anxious to finish our journey while it was cool ; and after a hard ride, galloped into the court-yard of Atlacamulco, which seemed like returning home. We spent a pleasant, idle day, lying down and reading while the sun was high, and in the evening sauntering about under the orange trees. We concluded with a hot bath.

7th. — Before continuing our journey, we determined to spend one more day here, which was fortunate, as we received a large packet of letters from home, forwarded to this place, and we have been read-

ing them, stretched under the shade of a natural bower formed by orange boughs, near a clear, cold tank of water in the garden. To-morrow we shall set off betimes for the hacienda of Cocoyoc, the property of Don Juan Goriva, with whom C——n was acquainted in Mexico. After visiting that and some other of the principal estates, we shall continue our ride to Puebla, and as we shall pass a few days there, hope to have leisure to write again from that city.

LETTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

Ride by star-light — Fear of robbers — Tropical wild flowers — Stout escort — *Hautepec* — Hacienda of *Cocoyoc* — A fire — Three thousand orange trees — Coffee mills, &c. — Variety of tropical fruits — Prodigality of nature — *Casa-sano* — Celebrated reservoir — Ride to Santa Clara — A philosopher — A scorpion — Leave Santa Clara — Dangerous *barranca* — *Colon* — Agreeable house — Civil *administrador* — San Nicolas — Solitude — Franciscan friar — Rainy morning — Pink turban — Arrival at *Atlisco* — Cypress — Department of Puebla — Volcanoes — Doña Marina — Verses — *Popocateptl* — Cholula — Great pyramid — Arrival at Puebla.

ON the ninth of February we took leave of Atlacmuleo and the hospitable administrador, and our party being diminished by the absence of Don Pedro, who was obliged to go to Mexico, we set off as usual by star-light, being warned of various *bad bits* on the road, where the ladies at least were advised to dismount. The country was wild and pretty, mountainous and stony. When the light came in we separated and galloped about in all directions. The air was cool and laden with sweetness. We came, however, to a pretty lane, where those of our escort who were in front stopped, and those who were behind rode up and begged us to keep close together, as for many leagues the country was haunted by robbers. Guns and pistols being looked to, we rode on in

serried ranks, expecting every moment to hear a bullet whizz over our heads.

Here were the most beautiful wild flowers we have yet seen ; some purple, white and rose color in one blossom ; probably the flower called *ocelojo-chitl* or viper's head ; others bright scarlet ; others red, with white and yellow stripes, and with an Indian name, signifying the tiger's flower ; some had rose-colored blossoms ; others were of the purest white.

We came at last to a road over a mountain, about as bad as anything we had yet seen. Our train of horses and mules, and men in their Mexican dresses, looked very picturesque, winding up and down these steep crags ; and here again, forgetful of robbers, each one wandered according to his own fancy, some riding forward, and others lingering behind to pull branches of these beautiful wild blossoms. The horses' heads were covered with flowers of every color, so that they looked like victims adorned for sacrifice. C——n indulged his botanical and geological propensities, occasionally to the great detriment of his companions, as we were anxious to arrive at some resting place before the sun became insupportable. As for the robbers, these gentlemen, who always keep a sharp look-out and rarely endanger their precious persons without some sufficient motive, and who moreover seem to have some magical power of seeing through stone walls and into portmanteaus, were no doubt aware that our luggage would neither have replenished their own nor their *ladies'* wardrobes, and calculated that people who travel for pleasure are not likely to carry any great

quantity of superfluous coin. Besides this, they are much more afraid of these honest, stout, well-armed farm servants, who are a fine race of men, than even of soldiers.

We arrived about six o'clock at the village of Hau-tepec, remarkable for its fine old church and lofty trees, especially for one magnificent wide-spreading ash tree in the church-yard. There were also many of those pretty trees with the silvery bark, which always look as if the moon were shining on them. The road began to improve, but the sun became very oppressive about nine o'clock, when we arrived at a pretty village, which had a large church and a *venta*, (tavern) where we stopped to refresh ourselves with water and some very well-baked small cakes. The village was so pretty that we had some thoughts of remaining there till the evening, but as Don Juan assured us that one hour's good gallop would carry us to Cocoyoc, the hacienda of Don Juan Gorivar, we determined to continue. We had a dreadful ride in the hot sun, till we arrived at a pretty Indian village on the estate, and shortly after entered the court-yard of the great hacienda of Cocoyoc, where we were most hospitably welcomed by the proprietor and his family.

We were very tired, owing to the extreme heat, and white with dust. A fresh toilette, cold water, an hour's rest, and an excellent breakfast, did wonders for us. Soon after our arrival, the sugar house, or rather the cane rubbish, took fire, and the great bell swung heavily to and fro, summoning the workmen to assist in getting it under. It was not extin-

guished for some time, and the building is so near the house, that the family were a little alarmed. We stood on the balcony, which commands a beautiful view of Popocatapetl, watching the blaze. After a hard battle between fire and water, water carried the day.

In the evening we drove to the orange grove, where three thousand lofty trees are ranged in avenues, literally bending under the weight of their golden fruit and snowy blossom. I never saw a more beautiful sight. Each tree is perfect, and lofty as a forest tree. The ground under their broad shadows is strewn with thousands of oranges, dropping in their ripeness, and covered with the white, fragrant blossoms. The place is lovely, and everywhere traversed by streams of the purest water. We ate a disgraceful number of oranges, limes, guayavas, and all manner of fruits, and even tasted the sweet beans of the coffee plants.

We spent the next morning in visiting the coffee mills, the great brandy works, sugar houses, &c., all which are in the highest order; and in strolling through the orange groves, and admiring the curious and beautiful flowers, and walking among orchards of loaded fruit trees — the calabash, papaw, mango, tamarind, citron — also mameys, chirimoyas, custard apples, and all the family of the zapotes, white, black, yellow and *chico*; cayotes, cocoas, cacahuates, aguacates, &c. &c. &c., a list without an end.

Besides these are an infinity of trees covered with the brightest blossoms; one, with large scarlet flowers, most gorgeous in their coloring, and one whose

blossoms are so like large pink silk tassels, that if hung to the cushions of a sofa, you could not discover them to be flowers. What prodigality of nature in these regions! With what a lavish hand she flings beauty and luxury to her tropical children!

In the evening we drove to Casasano, an hacienda about three leagues from Cocoyoc, and passed by several other fine estates, amongst others, the hacienda of Calderon. Casasano is an immense old house, very dull looking, the road to which lies through a fine park for cattle, dotted with great old trees, but of which the grass is very much burnt up. Each hacienda has a large chapel attached to it, at which all the workmen and villagers in the environs attend mass; a padre coming from a distance on Sundays and fête days. Frequently there is one attached to the establishment. We went to see the celebrated water tank of Casasano, the largest and most beautiful reservoir in this part of the country; the water so pure, that though upwards of thirty feet deep, every blade of grass at the bottom is visible. Even a pin, dropped upon the stones below, is seen shining quite distinctly. A stone wall, level with the water, thirty feet high, encloses it, on which I ventured to walk all round the tank, which is of an oval form, with the assistance of our host, going one by one. A fall would be sufficiently awkward, involving drowning on one side and breaking your neck on the other. The water is beautiful — a perfect mirror, with long green feathery plants at the bottom.

The next morning we took leave of our friends at

three o'clock, and set off for Santa Clara, the hacienda of Don Eusebio Garcia. Señor Goriva made me a present of a very good horse, and our ride that day was delightful, though the roads led over the most terrible barrancas. For nine long leagues, we did nothing but ford rivers and climb steep hills, those who were pretty well mounted, beating up the tired cavalry. But during the first hours of our ride, the air was so fresh among the hills, that even when the sun was high, we suffered little from the heat; and the beautiful and varied views we met at every turn were full of interest.

Santa Clara is a striking, imposing mass of building, beautifully situated at the foot of three bold, high rocks, with a remarkably handsome church attached to it. The family were from home, and the agent was a philosopher, living upon herb-tea, quite above the common affairs of life. It is a fine hacienda, and very productive, but sad and solitary in the extreme, and as K—— and I walked about in the court yard after supper, where we had listened to frightful stories of robbers and robberies, we felt rather uncomfortably dreary, and anxious to change our quarters. We visited the sugar-works, which are like all others, the chapel, which is very fine, and the shop where they sell spirituous liquors and calicoes.

The hills looked gray and solemn. The sun sunk gloomily behind them, his color a turbid red. So much had been said about robbers, that we were not sure how our next day's journey might terminate. The administrador's own servant had turned out to

be the captain of a band! whom the robbers, from some mysterious motive, had murdered a few days before.

As we intended to rise before dawn, we went to bed early, about nine o'clock, and were just in the act of extinguishing a melancholy-looking candle, when we were startled by the sight of an alacran on the wall. A man six feet high came at our call. He looked at the scorpion, shook his head, and ran out. He came back in a little while with another large man, he with a great shoe in his hand, and his friend with a long pole. While they were both hesitating how to kill it, Don Juan came in, and did the deed. We had a melancholy night after this, afraid of everything, with a long unsnuffed tallow candle illuminating the darkness of our large and lonely chamber.

The next morning, the 11th of February, before sunrise, we took our leave, in the darkness, of Santa Clara and the philosopher. The morning, wonderful to relate, was windy, and almost cold. The roads were frightful, and we hailed the first gray streak that appeared in the eastern sky, announcing the dawn, which might enable us at least to see our perils. Fortunately it was bright daylight when we found ourselves crossing a barranca, so dangerous, that after following for some time the precipitous course of the mountain path, we thought it advisable to get off our horses, who were pawing the slippery rock, without being able to find any rest for the soles of their feet. We had a good deal of difficulty in getting along ourselves on foot among the loose, sharp stones, and the horses, between sliding and stumb-

ling, were a long while in accomplishing the descent. After climbing up the barranca, one of them ran off along the edge of the cliff, as if he were determined to cut the whole concern, and we wasted some time in catching him.

It was the afternoon when we rode through the lanes of a large Indian village, and shortly after arrived at Colon, an hacienda belonging to Don Antonio Orria. He was from home, but the good reception of the honest administrador, the nice, clean, cheerful house, with its pretty painted chairs, good beds, the excellent breakfasts and dinners, and the *good will* visible in the whole establishment, delighted us very much, and decided us to pitch our tent here for a day or two. Some Spaniards, hearing of C——'s arrival, rode over from a distance to see him, and dined with us. There was a capital housekeeper, famous for her excellent cakes and preserves. We had also the refreshment of a warm bath, and felt ourselves as much at home as if we had been in our own house.

The next morning we rode through the great sugarcane fields to the hacienda of San Nicolas, one of the finest estates in the Republic, eighteen leagues long and five wide, belonging to Señor Zamora, in right of his wife. It is a productive place, but a singularly dreary residence. We walked out to see all the works, which are on a great scale, and breakfasted with the proprietor, who was there alone. We amused ourselves by seeing the workmen receive their weekly pay, (this being Saturday) and at the mountains of copper piled up on tables in front of

the house. There is a feeling of vastness, of solitude and of dreariness in some of these great haciendas, which is oppressive. Especially about noon, when everything is still, and there is no sound except the incessant buzz of myriads of insects, I can imagine it like what the world must have been before man was created.

Colon, which is not so large as San Nicolas, has a greater air of life about it; and in fact we liked it so well, that, as ——— observed, we seemed inclined to consider it, not as a *colon*, but a *full stop*. You must not expect more vivacious puns in *tierra caliente*. We rode back from San Nicolas in the afternoon, accompanied by the proprietor, and had some thoughts of going to *Matamoras* in the evening to see the Barber of Seville performed by a strolling company in the open air, under a tree! admittance twenty-five cents. However we ended by remaining where we were, and spent the evening in walking about through the village, surrounded by barking dogs, the greatest nuisance in these places, and pulling wild flowers, and gathering castor oil nuts from the trees. A begging Franciscan friar, from the convent of San Fernando, arrived for his yearly supply of sugar which he begs from the different haciendas, for his convent, a tribute which is never refused.

We left our hospitable entertainer the next morning, with the addition of sundry baskets of cake and fruit from the housekeeper. As we were setting off, I asked the administrador if there were any barrancas on this road. "No," said he, "but I have sent a basket-full with one of the boys, as they are very

refreshing." I made no remark, concluding I should find out his meaning in the course of the journey, but keeping a sharp look-out on the mysterious *mozo*, who was added to our train. When the light became stronger, I perceived that he carried under his sarape, a large basket of fine *naranjas*, (oranges) which no doubt the honest administrador thought I was inquiring after. It rained, when we left Colon, a thick misty drizzle, and the difference of the temperature gave us notice that we were passing out of *tierra caliente*. The road was so straight and uninteresting, though the surrounding country was fertile, that a few barrancas would really have been enlivening.

At Colon we took leave of our conductor, Don Juan, who returned to Atlacamulco, and got a new director of our forces, a handsome man, yeleft Don Francisco, who had been a Spanish soldier. We had an uncomfortable ride in a high wind and hard rain, the roads good, but devoid of interest, so that we were glad when we learnt that *Atlisco*, a town where we were to pass the night, was not far off. Within a mile or two of the city, we were met by a tall man on horseback, with a pink turban, and a wild, swarthy face, who looked like an Abencerrage, and who came with the compliments of his master, a Spanish gentleman, to say, that a house had been prepared for us in the town.

Atlisco is a large town, with a high mountain behind it crowned by a white chapel, a magnificent church at the base ; the whole city full of fine churches and convents, with a plaza and many good houses.

The numerous pipes pointed all along from the roofs, have a very threatening and war-like effect ; one seems to ride up the principal street under a strong fire. We found that Don Fernando ——, pink turban's master, not considering his own house good enough, had, on hearing of our expected arrival, hired another, and furnished part of it for us ! This is the sort of wholesale hospitality one meets with in this country. Our room looked out upon an old Carmelite monastery, where C——n, having a recommendation to the prior, paid a visit, and found one or two good paintings. Here also we saw the famous cypress mentioned by Humboldt, which is seventy-three feet in circumference. The next morning, we set out with an escort of seven *mozos*, headed by Don Francisco, and all well armed, for the road from Atlisco to Puebla is the robbers' highway, *par excellence*.

This valley of Atlisco, as indeed the whole department of Puebla, is noted for its fertility, and its abundant crops of maguey, wheat, maize, frijoles, garbanzos, barley and other vegetables, as well as for the fineness of its fruits, its chirimoyas, &c. There is a Spanish proverb, which says,

“ Si a morar en Indias fueres
Que sea doude los volcanes vieres.”

“ If you go to live in the Indias, let it be within sight of the volcanoes ; ” for it appears that all the lands surrounding the different volcanoes are fertile, and enjoy a pleasant climate. The great Cordilleras of Anahuac cross this territory, and amongst these are the Mountain of the Malinchi, Ixtaccihuatl, Popoca-

tapetl, and the Peak of Orizava. The Malinchi, a corruption by the Spaniards of the Indian name Malintzin, signifying Doña Maria or Marina, is supposed to be called after Cortes's Indian Egeria, the first Christian woman of the Mexican Empire.

Though given to Cortes by the Tabascan Indians, it seems clear that she was of noble birth, and that her father was the lord of many cities. It is pretended that she fell into a tributary situation, through the treachery of her mother, who remarried after the death of her first husband, and who, bestowing all her affection on the son born of this second marriage, determined, in concert with her husband, that all their wealth should pass to him. It happened, in furtherance of their views, that the daughter of one of their slaves died, upon which they gave out that they had lost their own daughter, affected to mourn for her, and at the same time, privately sold her after the fashion of Joseph's brethren, to some merchants of Gicalanco; who in their turn disposed of her to their neighbors, the Tabascans; who presented her to Cortes. That she was beautiful and of great talent, versed in different dialects, the devoted friend of the Spaniards, and serving as their interpreter in their negotiations with the various Indian tribes, there seems no doubt. She accompanied Cortes in all his expeditions — he followed her advice; and in the whole history of the conquest, Doña Marina, (the name given to the beautiful slave at her Christian baptism) played an important part. Her son, Martin Cortes, a knight of the order of Santiago, was put to the torture in the time of Philip the second, on

some unfounded suspicion of rebellion. It is said that when Cortes, accompanied by Doña Marina went to Honduras, she met her guilty relatives, who, bathed in tears, threw themselves at her feet, fearful lest she might avenge herself of their cruel treatment ; but that she calmed their fears, and received them with much kindness. The name of her birthplace was Painala, a village in the province of Cuatzacualco. After the conquest, she was married to a Spaniard, named Juan de Jaramillo.

But I have wandered a long way from the Sierra Malinchi. The two great volcanoes, but especially Popocatepetl, the highest mountain in New Spain, seem to follow the traveller like his guardian spirit, wherever he goes. Orizava, which forms a boundary between the departments of Puebla and Vera Cruz, is said to be the most beautiful of mountains on a near approach, as it is the most magnificent at a distance ; for while its summit is crowned with snow, its central part is girded by thick forests of cedar and pine, and its base is adorned with woods and sloping fields covered with flocks and dotted with white ranchos and small scattered villages ; forming the most agreeable and varied landscape imaginable. Ixtaccihuatl means white woman ; Popocatepetl the mountain that throws out smoke. They are thus celebrated by the poet Heredia.

Nieve eternal corona las cabezas
De Ixtaccihuatl purissimo, Orizava
Y Popocatepec ; sin que el invierno
Toque jamas con destructora mano
Los campos fertilisimos do ledó
Los mira el indio en purpura ligera

Yoro teñirse, reflejando el brillo
 Del sol en Occidente, que sereno
 En yelo eterno y perennal verdura
 A torrentes vertió su luz dorada
 Y vió a naturaleza conmovida
 Con su dulce calor, hervir en vida.

TRANSLATION.

Eternal snow crowns the majestic heads
 Of Orizava, Popocatepetl
 And of Ixtaccihuatl the most pure.
 Never does winter with destructive hand
 Lay waste the fertile fields where from afar
 The Indian views them bathed in purple light
 And dyed in gold, reflecting the last rays
 Of the bright sun, which sinking in the west,
 Poured forth his flood of golden light, serene
 Midst ice eternal, and perennial green ;
 And saw all nature warming into life,
 Moved by the gentle radiance of his fires.

The morning was really cold, and when we first set out, Popocatepetl was rolled up in a mantle of clouds. The road led us very near him. The wind was very piercing, and K—— was mounted on a curate's pony, evidently accustomed to short distances and easy travelling. We had been told that it was "muy proprio para Señora," very much suited to a lady, an encomium always passed upon the oldest, most stupid and most obstinate quadruped that the haciendas can boast. We overtook and passed a party of cavalry, guarding some prisoners, whom they were conducting to Puebla.

As the sun rose, all eyes were turned with amazement and admiration, to the great volcano. The

clouds parted in the middle, and rolled off in great volumes, like a curtain withdrawn from a high altar. The snowy top and sides of the mountain appeared, shining in the bright sun, like a grand dome of the purest white marble. But it cannot be described. I thought of Sinai, of Moses on the Mount, when the glory of the Lord was passing by ; of the mountain of the Transfiguration, something too intolerably bright and magnificent for mortal eye to look upon and live. We rode slowly, and in speechless wonder, till the sun, which had crowned the mountain like a glory, rose slowly from its radiant brow, and we were reminded that it was time to ride forwards.

We were now not far from the ancient city of Cholula, lying on a great plain at a short distance from the mountains, and glittering in the sunbeams, as if it still were the city of predilection as in former days, when it was the sacred city, "the Rome of Anahuac." It is still a large town, with a spacious square and many churches, and the ruins of its great pyramid still attest its former grandeur ; but of the forty thousand houses and four hundred churches mentioned by Cortes, there are no traces. The base of this pyramid, which at a distance looks like a conical mountain, is said by Humboldt to be larger than that of any discovered in the old continent, being double that of Cheops. It is made of layers of brick mixed with coats of clay, and contains four stories. In the midst of the principal platform, where the Indians worshipped Quetzalcoatl, the god of the air, (according to some the patriarch Noah, and according to others the apostle Saint Thomas ! for *doctors differ*,) rises a

church dedicated to the Virgin de los Remedios, surrounded by cypresses, from which there is one of the most beautiful views in the world. From this pyramid, and it is not the least interesting circumstance connected with it, Humboldt made many of his valuable astronomical observations.

The treachery of the people and priests of Cholula, who after welcoming Cortes and the Spaniards, formed a plan for exterminating them all, which was discovered by Doña Marina, through the medium of a lady of the city, was visited by him with the most signal vengeance. The slaughter was dreadful; the streets were covered with dead bodies, and houses and temples were burnt to the ground. This great temple was afterwards purified by his orders, and the standard of the cross solemnly planted in the midst. Cholula, not being on the direct road to Puebla, is little visited, and as for us, our time was now so limited, that we were obliged to content ourselves with a mere passing observation of the pyramid, and then to hurry forward to Puebla.

We entered that city to the number of eighteen persons, eighteen horses, and several mules, and passed some people near the gates who were carrying blue-eyed angels to the chosen city, and who nearly let them drop, in astonishment, on seeing such a cavalcade. We were very cold, and felt very tired as we rode into the court-yard of the hotel, yet rather chagrined to think that the remainder of our journey was now to be performed in a diligence. Having brought my story up to civilized life, and it being late, I conclude.

LETTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

Theatre — Portmanteaus — Visitors — Houses of Puebla — Fine arts — Paseo — Don N. Ramos Arispe — Bishop — Cotton factories — Don Esteban Antuñano — Bank of *Avio* — United States machinery — Accidents — Difficulties — Shipwrecks — Detentions — Wonderful perseverance — “*La Constanca Mejicana*” Hospital — Prison — El Carmen — Paintings — Painted floors — Angels — Cathedral — Gold and jewels — A comedy — Bishop’s palace — Want of masters.

PUEBLA.

YOU will be surprised when I tell you that, notwithstanding our fatigue, we went to the theatre the evening we arrived, and sat through a long and tragical performance, in the box of Don A——o H——o, one of the richest citizens of Puebla, who, hearing of our arrival, instantly came to invite us to his house, where he assured us rooms were prepared for our reception. But being no longer in savage parts, where it is necessary to throw yourself on the hospitality of strangers or to sleep in the open air, we declined his kind offer, and remained in the inn, which is very tolerable, though we do not see it now *en beau* as we did last year, when we were expected there. The theatre is clean and neat, but dull, and we were much more looked at than the actors, for few foreigners (ladies especially) remain here for any length of time, and their appearance is somewhat of a novelty. Our toilette occasioned us no small difficulty, now

that we were again in polished cities, for you may imagine the condition of our trunks, which two mules had galloped with over ninety leagues of plain and mountain, and which had been opened every night. Such torn gowns, crushed collars, ruined *pélérines* ! One carpet bag had burst, and discharged its contents of combs, brushes, &c., over a barranca, where some day they may be picked up as Indian antiquities, and sent to the Museum, to be preserved as a proof that Montezuma's wives brushed their hair. However, by dint of a washerwoman and sundry messages to *peluqueros*, (hair-dressers) we were enabled to *turn out* something like Christian travellers. The first night we could not sleep on account of the innumerable ants, attracted probably by a small garden, with one or two orange trees in it, into which our room opened.

The next morning we had a great many visitors, and though there is here a good deal of that provincial pretension one always meets with out of a capital, we found some pleasant people amongst them. The Señora H——o came in a very handsome carriage, with beautiful northern horses, and took us out to see something of the town. Its extreme cleanness after Mexico is remarkable. In that respect it is the Philadelphia of the Republic ; with wide streets, well paved ; large houses of two stories, very solid and well-built ; magnificent churches, plenty of water, and withal a dullness which makes one feel as if the houses were rows of convents, and all the people, except beggars and a few business men, shut up in performance of a vow.

The house of Don A——o H——o is, I think, more elegantly furnished than any in Mexico. It is of immense size, and the floors beautifully painted. One large room is furnished with pale blue satin, another with crimson damask, and there are fine inlaid tables, handsome mirrors, and everything in very good taste. He and his wife are both very young — she not more than nineteen, very delicate and pretty, and very fair ; and in her dress, neatness, and house, she reminds me of a Philadelphian, always with the exception of her diamonds and pearls. The ladies smoke more, or at least more openly than in Mexico, but they have so few amusements, they deserve more indulgence. There are eleven convents of nuns in the city, and taking the veil is as common as being married. We dined at the Señora H——o's — found her very amiable, and heard a young lady sing, who has a good voice, but complains that there are no music-masters in Puebla.

The fine arts, however, are not entirely at a stand-still here, and in architecture, sculpture and painting, there is a good deal, comparatively speaking, worthy of notice. There used to be a proverb amongst the Mexicans, that “if all men had five senses, the Poblanos had seven.” They are considered very reserved in their manners ; a natural consequence of their having actually no society. Formerly, Puebla rivalled Mexico in population and in industry. The plague, which carried off fifty thousand persons, was followed by the pestilence of civil war, and Puebla dwindled down to a very secondary city. But we now hear a great deal of their cotton factories, and

of the machines, instruments and workmen brought from Europe here, already giving employment to thirty thousand individuals.

In the evening we drove to the new paseo, a public promenade, where none of the public were to be seen, and which will be pretty when the young trees grow.

19th. — C——n went out early, and returned the visit of the celebrated Don N. Ramos Arispe, now an old man, and canon of the cathedral, but formerly deputy in the Spanish Cortes, and the most zealous supporter of the cause of independence. It is said that he owed the great influence which he had over men of a middling character, rather to his energetic, some say his domineering disposition, than to genius ; that he was clear-headed, active, dexterous, remarkable for discovering hidden springs and secret motives, and always keeping his subordinates zealously employed in his affairs. C——n also visited the Bishop, Señor Vasques, who obtained from Rome the acknowledgment of independence.

We set out after breakfast with several gentlemen who came to take us to the cotton factories, &c. We went first to visit the factory established at the mill of Santo Domingo, a little way out of the city, and called “La Constancia Mejicana,” (Mexican Constancy.) It was the first established in the Republic, and deserves its name from the great obstacles that were thrown in the way of its construction, and the numerous difficulties that had to be conquered before it came into effect.

In 1831, a junta for the encouragement of public

industry was formed, but the obstacles thrown in the way of every proposal were so great, that the members all abandoned it in despair, excepting only the Señor *Don Esteban Antuñano*, who was determined himself to establish a manufactory of cotton, to give up his commercial relations, and to employ his whole fortune in attaining this object.

He bought the mill of Santo Domingo for one hundred and seventy-eight thousand dollars, and began to build the edifice, employing foreign workmen at exorbitant prices. In this he spent so much of his capital, that he was obliged to have recourse to the Bank of *Avio* for assistance. This Bank (*Avio* meaning pecuniary assistance, or advance of funds,) was established by Don Lucas Alaman, and intended as an encouragement to industry. But industry is not of the nature of a hothouse plant, to be forced by artificial means; and these grants of funds have but created monopolies, and consequently added to the general poverty. Machinery, to the amount of three thousand eight hundred and forty spindles, was ordered for Antuñano from the United States, and a loan granted him of one hundred and seventy-eight thousand dollars, but of which he never received the whole. Meanwhile his project was sneered at as absurd, impossible, ruinous; but, firmly resolved not to abandon his enterprise, he contented himself with living with the strictest economy, himself and his numerous family almost suffering from want, and frequently unable to obtain credit for the provisions necessary for their daily use.

To hasten the arrival of the machinery, he sent

an agent to the north to superintend it and to hire workmen ; but the commercial house to which he was recommended, and which at first gave him the sums he required, lost their confidence in the agent, and redemanded their money, so that he was forced to sell his clothes in order to obtain food and lodging. In July, 1833, the machinery was embarked at Philadelphia, and in August arrived at Vera Cruz, to the care of Señor Paso y Troncoso, who never abandoned Antuñano in his adversity, and even lent him unlimited sums ; but much delay ensued, and a year elapsed before it reached Puebla. There, after it was all set up, the ignorant foreign workmen declared that no good results would ever be obtained ; that the machines were bad, and the cotton worse. However, by the month of January, 1833, they began to work in the factory, to which was given the name of "Mexican Constancy." A mechanist was then sent to the north, to procure a collection of new machinery, and after extraordinary delays and difficulties, he embarked with it at New York in February, 1837.

He was shipwrecked near Cayo-Hueso ; and with all the machinery he could save, returned to the north, in the brig *Argos* ; but on his way there, he was shipwrecked again, and all the machinery lost ! He went to Philadelphia, to have new machines constructed, and in August reëmbarked in the *Delaware*. Incredible as it may seem, the *Delaware* was wrecked off Cayo-Alcatraces, and for the third time, the machinery was lost, the mechanist saving himself with great difficulty !

It seemed as if gods and men had conspired against the cotton spindles ; yet Antuñano persevered. Fresh machinery was ordered ; and though by another fatality it was detained, owing to the blockade of the ports by the French squadron, seven thousand spindles were landed, and speedily put in operation. Others have followed the example of Señor Antuñano, who has given a decided impulse to industry in Puebla, besides a most extraordinary example of perseverance, and a determined struggle against what men call *bad luck*; which persons of a feeble character sink under, while stronger minds oppose till they conquer it.

It was in his carriage we went, and he accompanied us all over the building. It is beautifully situated, and at a distance has more the air of a summer palace than of a cotton factory. Its order and airiness are delightful, and in the middle of the court in front of the building, is a large fountain of the purest water. A Scotchman, who has been there for some time, says he has never seen anything to compare with it, and he worked six years in the United States. Antuñano is unfortunately very deaf, and obliged to use an ear-trumpet. He seems an excellent man, and I trust he may be ultimately successful. We came out covered with cotton, as if we had been just unpacked, and were next taken to visit a very handsome new prison, which they are building in the city, but whether it will ever be finished or not, is more doubtful. We also visited the Foundling Hospital, a large building, where there are more children than funds. They were all clean

and respectable looking, but very poor. Antuñano presented them with two hundred dollars, as a memorial, he said, of our visit.

C——n then went to the convent of El Carmen, to see the paintings of the Life of the Virgin, supposed to be original works of Murillo, particularly the Ascension and Circumcision, but which are ill-arranged, and have suffered greatly from neglect, many of them being torn. Indeed, in some of them are large holes made by the boys, who insisted that the Jewish priest was *the Devil*. There is a Descent from the Cross, which is reckoned a fine painting; and it is a pity that these works should be shut up in this old convent, where there are about half a dozen old monks, and where they serve no purpose, useful or ornamental. Were they removed to the Mexican Museum, and arranged with care, they would at least serve as models for those young artists who have not the means of forming their taste by European travel. Zendejas as a painter, and Coro as a sculptor, both natives of Puebla, are celebrated in their respective arts, but we have not yet seen any of their works. C——n also visited the Bishop, and saw his paintings and library, which we hope to do to-morrow; and from thence went to the college, the rector of which was attaché in Spain to the Minister Santa Maria.

We dined again in the house of Señor H——o. The manner in which his floors are painted, is pretty and curious. It is in imitation of carpets, and is very rich in appearance and very cool in reality. A great many of the floors here are painted in this

way, either upon canvass with oil colors, or upon a cement extended upon the bricks of which the floor is made, and prepared with glue, lime or clay, and soap.

Señor H——o has four young and pretty sisters, all nuns in different convents. As there are no other schools but these convents, the young girls who are sent there become attached to the nuns, and prefer remaining with them forever to returning home. After dinner, accompanied by Don N. Ramos Arispe, whom C——n formerly knew intimately in Madrid, and by various other ecclesiastics, we visited the boast of Puebla, the cathedral, which we did not do when we passed through the city on our arrival last year. To my mind, I have never seen anything more noble and magnificent. It is said that the rapid progress of the building was owing to the assistance of two angels, who nightly descended and added to its height, so that each morning the astonished workmen found their labor incredibly advanced. The name given to the city, "Puebla de los Angeles," is said to be owing to this tradition.

It is not so large as the cathedral of Mexico, but it is more elegant, simpler, and in better taste. Sixteen columns of exquisite marble, adorned with silver and gold, form the *tabernacle*, (in Mexico called *el Ciprés*.) This native marble, called Puebla marble, is brought from the quarries of Totamehuacan and Tecali, at two and seven leagues from the city. The floor of the cathedral is of marble — the great screens and high-backed chairs of richly carved cedar. Everything was opened to show us; the tombs where the

bishops are buried ; the vault where a martyr lies, supposed to have been miraculously preserved for centuries, the gift of a Pope to a Bishop of Puebla. The figure appears to be of wax, enclosing the skeleton of the martyr, and has the most angelic countenance I ever beheld. It is loaded with false emeralds and diamonds.

We were also shown the jewels which they keep buried, in case of a revolution. The *Custodia*, the gold stand in which they carry the Host, is entirely encrusted with large diamonds, pearls, emeralds, amethysts, topazes and rubies. The chalices are equally rich. There are four sets of jewels for the Bishop. One of his crosses is of emeralds and diamonds ; another of topazes and diamonds, with great rings of the same, belonging to each.

In the evening we went with the M—— family, who have been very civil to us, to the theatre, where we saw a comedy better acted and more amusing than the tragedy which they murdered two nights before. We went early the next morning to the Bishop's palace, to see his fine library and collection of paintings, where there were a few modern originals and many fine copies of the old masters. We then went with the Señora H——o to return the visits of the ladies who had called on us. The young ladies invariably complain that they have neither music nor drawing nor dancing-masters. There is evidently a great deal of musical taste amongst them, and as in every part of Mexico, town or country, there is a piano (*tal cual*) in every house ; but most of those who play are self-taught, and naturally

abandon it very soon, for want of instruction or encouragement. We are now going to dine out, and in the evening we go to a concert in the theatre, given by the Señora Cesari and Mr. Wallace. As we must rise at three to set off by the diligence, I shall write no more from this place. Our next letters will be from Mexico.

LETTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

Concert — Diligence — Leave Puebla — Escort — View from the cathedral towers — Black forest — History of the crosses — Tales of murder — An alarm — Report of a skirmish — Rio Frio — Law concerning robbers — Their *moderation* — Return to Mexico — Carnival ball — Improvement in dress.

MEXICO, 24th.

WE went to the concert with our friends, the H——o's. The music was better than the instruments, and the Señora Cesari looked handsome, as she always does, besides being beautifully dressed in white, with Paris wreaths. We took leave of our friends at the door of the hotel, at one in the morning, and lay down for two hours, in the full expectation of being robbed the following day, a circumstance which has now grown so common, that when the diligence from Puebla arrives in safety it excites rather more sensation than when it has been stopped. The Governor had ordered us an escort to Mexico, to be stationed about every six leagues, but last week the escort itself, and even the gallant officer at its head, were suspected of being the plunderers. Our chief hope lay in that well-known miraculous knowledge which they possess as to the value of all travellers' luggage, which no doubt not only makes them aware that we are mere pilgrims for pleasure,

and not fresh arrivals, laden with European commodities, but also renders them perfectly familiar with the contents of our well-shaken portmanteaus; so that we trusted that a sarape or two, a few rings and ear-rings, and one or two shawls, would not prove sufficient to tempt them. We got into the diligence in the dark, half asleep, having taken all the places but three, which were engaged before we came; some sleepy soldiers on horseback, ready to accompany us, and a loaded gun sticking out of each window. Various beggars, who are here innumerable, already surrounded us; and it is, by the way, a remarkable circumstance, that notwithstanding the amazing numbers of these léperos in Puebla, the churches there are kept scrupulously clean, from which Mexico might take a hint with advantage.

Puebla is one of the few cities founded by the Spanish colonists, instead of being built upon the ruins of former greatness. It was founded in the sixteenth century, on the plains of Acajete, in a site occupied only by a few huts belonging to the Cholula Indians. It is surrounded by productive corn estates, and the landscape, when the light visited our eyes, was fertile though flat. The two finest views of Puebla may be seen from the towers of the Cathedral, and from an azotea in the street of San Agustín. The landscape is extremely varied and very extensive.

To the north we see the mountain of Tlascala, the *Matlalcueyetl*, better known as the Malinchi; next it the hill and temple of Guadalupe and the mountain of the Pinar, crowned by its white church.

Other churches and convents adorn the slopes of the mountains, the Church of Loreto, the Temple of Calvary, &c. The Malinchi is fertile, but these inferior mountains are sterile and bare.

To the south lie the great volcanoes, and between them we can distinguish the difficult and steep road by which Cortes undertook his first march to Mexico. We also see the city and pyramid of Cholula, the hill of San Nicolas and that of San Juan, where General Bustamante encamped in 1832, when he went out against Santa Anna; near it the farm-houses of Posadas and Zavaleta, one celebrated by a battle, the other by a treaty.

To the east, but at a greater distance than the other mountains, rises the Peak of Orizava, the Star Mountain; the side now seen, that which rises over the table land of Mexico; its other side descends rapidly to the burning plains of Vera Cruz, and is the first distinguishable land discerned by those who approach these coasts. Even at this distance, its snowy summit is seen contrasting with its fertile woods and pleasant villages. It has, what mortals rarely possess united, a warm heart, with a clear, cold head.

We were awakened at a posada by their bringing us some hot coffee, and a man with a white night-cap on, having poked his head in at the window, in defiance of a loaded musket, I concluded he was a lépero, and sleepily told him I had nothing for him, in the phrase of the country to importunate beggars; “Perdone V. por Dios!” “Excuse me for God’s sake!” —but he proved to be a gentle-

man, who merely came to put himself and his property at our disposal, at that early hour of the morning.

When we entered the black forest, and passed through the dark pine woods, then the stories of robbers began, just as people at sea seem to take a particular pleasure in talking of shipwrecks. Every cross had its tale of murder, and by the way, it seems to me, that a work written with *connaissance de cause*, and entitled "History of the Crosses," though it might not equal the History of the *Crusades*, would be quite as interesting, and much more romantic than the Newgate Calendar. The difficulty would consist in procuring authentic information concerning them. There were a lady and two gentlemen in the diligence, and the lady seemed to be very much *au fait* as to their purport and history. Under one her own servant was buried, and she gave rather a graphic account of his murder. He was sitting outside, on the top of the diligence. The party within were numerous but unarmed. Suddenly a number of robbers with masks on, came shouting down upon them from amongst the pine trees. They first took aim at the poor *mozo*, and shot him through the heart. He fell, calling in piteous tones to a padre who was in the coach, entreating him to stop and confess him, and groaning out a farewell to his friend the driver. Mortal fear prevailed over charity both in priest and layman, and the coachman, whipping up his horses, passed at full gallop over the body of the murdered man, so that the robbers being on foot, the remainder of the party escaped.

Whilst we were listening to tales of blood and murder, our escort took leave of us, supposing that we should meet another immediately, whereas we found that we had arrived at the most dangerous part of the road, and that no soldiers were in sight. We certainly made up our minds to an attack this time, and got ready our rings and watches, not to hide, but to give, for we womenkind were clearly of opinion, that in case of an attack, it was much better to attempt no defence, our party having only two guns amongst them.

There was a diligence some way behind us, full of people, and belonging to another line; driven by a Yankee coachman, so drunk that he kept his seat with difficulty, and in defiance of all remonstrances, persisted in driving the coach at a gallop close by the brink of the great precipice along which the road wound; so that the poor passengers were exposed to a double danger.

Suddenly our escort appeared at the top of the hill, and the officer, riding up, excused himself to C——n for the delay, which had arisen from their having been engaged in a skirmish with the robbers in that very place. Two he said were taken, and he had marched them off to Puebla, where they will probably be let off in a few days, after a form of trial. Four had escaped, and had hid themselves amongst the trees and rocks, but could not, according to his calculations, be very far off. However, we were quite reassured by the arrival of the soldiers, and the sight of Rio Frio was very reviving. We got a very tolerable dinner from the Bordelaise in the forest-

valley ; and although the next part of the road is reckoned very insecure, we had no longer any apprehension, as, besides having an escort, the fact that some of the robbers had been taken a few hours before, made it very unlikely that they would renew their attempts that day.

This pestilence of robbers, which infests the republic, has never been eradicated. They are in fact the growth of civil war. Sometimes, in the guise of insurgents, taking an active part in the independence, they have independently laid waste the country, and robbed all whom they met. As expellers of the Spaniards, these armed bands infested the roads between Vera Cruz and the capital, ruined all commerce, and without any particular inquiry into political opinions, robbed and murdered in all directions. In 1824, a law was proposed in congress, which should subject all armed bands of robbers to military judges, in order to shorten proceedings, for many of those who had been apprehended and thrown into prison, found some opportunity to escape while their trial was pending, and many had been imprisoned four or five times for the same offence, yet never brought to justice. In this law were included, both robbers by profession, and those bodies of insurgents who were merely extempore amateurs.

But whatever measures have been taken at different times to eradicate this evil, its causes remain, and the idle and unprincipled will always take advantage of the disorganized state of a country, to obtain by force what they might gain by honest labor.

Count —— says gravely, that he cannot imagine why we complain of Mexican robbers, when the city of London is full of organized gangs of ruffians, whom the laws cannot reach ; and when English highwaymen and housebreakers are the most celebrated in the world. Moreover, that Mexican robbers are never unnecessarily cruel, and in fact are very easily moved to compassion. This last assertion may, occasionally, hold good, but their cruelties to travellers are too well known to bear him out in it as a general remark.

As a proof of their occasional moderation, I may mention, that the ladies of the F——a family, at the time of their emigration, were travelling from Mexico with a *padre*, when they were met by a party of robbers or insurgents, who stopped the coach, and commenced pillaging. Amongst other articles of value, they seized a number of silver dishes. The *padre* observed to them, that as this plate did not belong to the ladies, but was lent them by a friend, they would be obliged to replace it, and requested that one might be left as a pattern. The reasonable creatures instantly returned a dish and a cover !

Another time, having completely stripped an English gentleman and his servant, and tied them both to a tree, observing that the man appeared particularly distressed at the loss of his master's spurs, they politely returned and laid the spurs beside the gentleman.

About four o'clock, though nearly blinded with dust, we once more looked down upon the valley of

Mexico, and at five, during our last change of horses, we were met by Don M——l del C——o and the English courier Beraza, who had rode out to meet us, and accompanied us on their fine horses as far as the Garita. Here we found our carriage waiting ; got in and drove through Mexico, dusty as we were, and warlike as we seemed, with guns at the windows. In the Calle San Francisco the carriage was stopped by Mr.——, Secretary to the English Legation, who invited us to a great masked and fancy carnival ball to be given on Monday, it being now Saturday. On our return home, we found everything in good order. Had some difficulty in procuring ball-dresses in time.

On Sunday we had a number of people to dinner, by chance, it being Spanish fashion to dine at a friend's house without invitation. This evening we go to the ball.

26th. — The ball was in the theatre, and very brilliant, but too many of the first people on these occasions keep their boxes, and do not dance ; yet it was wonderfully select for so large an assembly. When we arrived, we were led up stairs by some of the commissioners, those who had charge of the ball, to the E——s' box, whom we found, as usual, elegantly dressed — the married ladies of the family with diamonds, the younger ones in white crape and gold. I had a black silk mask, but finding myself universally recognised, saw no particular advantage in keeping it on, and promptly discarded it. We took a few turns in the ball-room, and afterwards returned to the box. There were some capital figures in masks, and some beautiful ball-dresses, and though there were a num-

ber of dominos and odd figures, I could not help remarking the great improvement in toilette which had taken place since the fancy ball of last year. One or two girls, especially the Señorita M—— wore ball-dresses which could only have proceeded from the fingers of a Parisian modiste. Madame de ——, dressed as a peasant, and with a mask, was known everywhere by her small foot and pretty figure. But it is impossible to look on at a ball very long, not mingling with it, without growing tired; and not even the numerous visiters to our box, could prevent us from feeling much more sleepy, than during many a moonlight ride through the lovely lanes of *tierra caliente*.

Next night there was a public masked ball, but we did not attend it. We feel much the better for our journey, and only hope that some day C——n may have leisure sufficient to enable us to take another ride through some other part of the country. This being near Lent, we shall have no *soirées* for six weeks, though balls are occasionally given during that time of fasting. The house has become very comfortable in the way of servants; our housekeeper a treasure, the coachman and footman excellent, the cook tolerable, the soldiers rarely tipsy more than once a week, and generally only one at a time, the others decent — so that we have nothing to complain of. —— has established a hen-house near the stable, and any old Indian woman who brings her a *manajo* (several hens tied together) is sure to be received with open arms.

One of our first visits on our return was to Ta-

cubaya, where we were sorry to find the Countess C——a very much indisposed, and her court-yard filled with carriages, containing visitors making inquiries. I shall now send off my letters by the packet, that you may see we are safely reëstablished in Mexico.

LETTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

Distinguished men — Generals Bustamante, Santa Anna and Victoria — Anecdote — Señor Pedraza — Señor Gutierrez Estrada — Count Cortina — Señor Gorostiza -- Don Carlos Bustamante — “ Mornings in the Alameda ” — Don Andrés Quintana Roo — Don Lucas Alaman — General Moran — General Almonte — Señor Cañedo — Señors Neri del Barrio and Casaflores — Doctor Valentin — Don Francisco Tagle — Eight revolutions.

27th.

H—— in his last letter asks what distinguished men we have in Mexico? and with a tone of doubt as to their being very numerous. Distinguished in what way? As generals, as statesmen, as men of literature? It seems to me that a country where we have known Bustamante, Santa Anna, General Victoria, Posada, Gomez Pedraza, Gutierrez Estrada, Count Cortina, Gorostiza, Don Carlos Bustamante, Quintana Roo, General Moran, Don Lucas Alaman, General Almonte, Señor Cañedo, Don Francisco Tagle, Señor Neri del Barrio, Señor Fagoaga, Don José Valentin, the Count de Casaflores, &c., &c., is not so destitute of distinguished men as he supposes. The preceding are, I confess, strung together as they occur to me, without order or regularity; soldiers, statesmen and literary men, some on one side of politics, some on another, but all men of note, and men who have acted, or suffered, or been distinguished in one

way or another in the revolutions of the last thirty-two years. And there is not one amongst those I have mentioned, who, if he were to write merely his personal history, would not by so doing write the history of these civil wars. The three first, as principal figures in every revolution, are already historical; Bustamante as an honest man and a brave soldier; Santa Anna as an acute general, active and aspiring, whose name has a *prestige*, whether for good or for evil, that no other possesses; General Victoria, a plain, uneducated, well-intentioned man, brave and enduring. A passage in his life is well known, which ought to be mentioned as an *offset* to the doubtful anecdote of the two-headed eagle. When Yturvide, alone, fallen and a prisoner, was banished from Mexico, and when General Bravo, who had the charge of conducting him to Vera Cruz, treated him with every species of indignity, Victoria, the sworn foe of the Emperor during his prosperity, now, when orders were given him to see Yturvide embarked, surrounded him with attentions, and loaded him with respectful distinctions; so that Yturvide himself, moved with gratitude, after expressing his warm esteem for the General's consistent conduct, presented him with his watch as a memorial of his grateful admiration.

As for Don Manuel Gomez Pedraza, he has occupied too distinguished a place in the political occurrences of this country, not to be generally known. An officer in the time of the Spanish government, he was distinguished for his severe discipline and strict moral conduct. In the time of Yturvide, he was military commandant of Huasteca, and supported

the Emperor, who afterwards made him Commander General of Mexico. In 1827 he was Minister of War, during the Presidency of Victoria, and was distinguished for his extraordinary activity, which quality was greatly wanting in that General. In 1828, he and Guerrero were announced as candidates for the presidency, and after a terrible political tempest, Gomez Pedraza was elected. The fermentation that succeeded ; the fury of the two parties, the *Guerrerristas* and *Pedrazistas*, which were mingled with *Yturbidistas*, was increased by the arrival of Santa Anna at Perote with eight hundred men, who, having shut himself up in the fortress, declared for Guerrero, and published a manifesto, which set forth that general as a hero, and his rival as a hypocrite. Then came the famous revolution of the *Acordada*, and both Pedraza and Guerrero disappeared. Pedraza left the Republic, and after another revolution, hearing that "the constitution and laws were reëstablished," returned to Vera Cruz ; but was met by an order which prohibited him from disembarking. He then set sail for New Orleans. Another change brought him back ; and at this present juncture, he lives in tranquillity, together with his lady, a person of extraordinary talent and learning, daughter of the Lizenciado (jurisconsult) Señor Azcárate. Such are the disturbed lives passed by the "children of the soil."

Of Gutierrez Estrada, now far from his household gods, and languishing under unjust persecution, I have already spoken. Count Cortina is a gentleman and a scholar, a man of vast information, and a pro-

tector of the fine arts. His conversation is a series of electric sparks; brilliant as an ignis fatuus, and bewildering as a will-o'-the-wisp. I have seldom heard such eloquence even in trifles; and he writes with as much ease as he speaks. We have seen three clever pieces of his lately, showing his versatile genius; one upon earthquakes, one upon the *devil*, and one upon the holy fathers of the church! — the first in the form of a pamphlet, addressed to a lady, giving a scientific explanation of the causes of these phenomena, interspersed with compliments to her *beaux yeux*; the second is a burlesque poem; and the third a grave and learned dissertation.

Don José Eduardo Gorostiza, though a native of Vera Cruz, is the son of a Spanish officer, and when very young went to Spain, where he was known politically as a Liberal. He was distinguished as a writer of theatrical pieces, which have been, and still are very popular, and those which he merely translated, he had the merit of adapting to the Spanish stage, and *Castilianizing* in grace and wit. One of his pieces which we saw the other evening at the theatre — “*Con tigo pan y cebolla*,” (with thee, bread and onions,) is delightful. Besides occupying a place in the Cabinet of Mexico, he has been Chargé d’ Affaires in Holland, and Minister at the Court of St. James. In conversation, he is extremely witty and agreeable, and he has collected some good paintings and valuable books in the course of his European travels.

The reputation of Don Carlos Bustamante, deputy from Oajaca, is altogether literary. He has made

many researches in Mexican antiquities ; and has published a history of the "Discovery of America," written by Padre Vega, which was unknown before ; also the "Gallery of Mexican Princes ;" "Tezcoco in the last days of its last Kings," &c. He lately sent me his "Mornings in the Alameda," a book intended to teach Mexican young ladies the history of their own country. I have read but a few pages of it, but was struck with the liberality of his remarks in regard to the Spaniards, which, coming from such a source, are so much more valuable and worthy of credit than any that can be made by a foreigner, that I am tempted to translate the passage to which I allude. "The Spanish government founded colleges and academies in the reign of the wise Charles the Third ; it established that of fine arts, which it enriched with the most beautiful statues, which you can still see when you visit it. ("Their transportation," he says in a note, "cost seventy thousand dollars.") He sent excellent workmen, and imitated his predecessor Philip the Second, who sent to Mexico whatever could not find a place in the works of the Escorial. Of his wisdom, we have proofs in those magnificent temples which attract the attention of travellers, such as the Cathedral of Mexico, San Agustin, Santo Domingo of Oaxaca, and others. Spain did no more, because she could do no more, and Spain gave to this America a constitution, which the Mexicans themselves, who pride themselves most on their learning, are unacquainted with ; and whose analysis was formed by the learned padre Mier, in the History of the Revolution, which

he printed in London ; a constitution, in which are made manifest the good intentions of the Austrian monarchs ; and their earnest desire to render the Indians happy ; especially in the case of the great Philip the Fourth, whose autograph law is preserved ; and which I have read with respect and emotion, prohibiting the bad treatment of the Indians. In short, this America, if it were considered in a state of slavery under the Spanish dominion, was at least on a level with the peninsula itself. Read over the frightful list of taxes which oppressed the Spaniards, and compare it with those that were imposed upon us, and you will find that theirs is infinitely greater than ours. These truths being granted, remark the progress which the colonies had made in sciences and arts, and this truth which escaped from the light pen of the censor Beristain, will be confirmed. Mexico, he says, was the sunflower of Spain. “ When in her principal universities there were no learned men to fill the mathematical chairs, Mexico could boast of Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora ; when in Madrid there was no one who had written a good epic poem, in Mexico the *Bernardo* was composed ;” &c. &c.

The next on my list is Don Andrés Quintana Roo, the best modern poet of Mexico, a native of Yucatan, and who came to the capital when very young, to study law. He is said to possess immense learning, and was enthusiastic to fanaticism in the cause of independence ; insomuch that he and his wife Doña Leona Vicario, who shared in his ardent love of liberty, braved every danger in its cause, suffered im-

prisonment, escaped from the Inquisition, from the hands of robbers, endured every privation, so that their history would form a romance. He is now devoted to literature, and though he occasionally launches forth some political pamphlet, he is probably wearied of revolutions, and possesses all the calmness of a man whose first years have been spent in excitement and troubles, and who at length finds consolation in study alone ; the well of science proving to him the waters of Lethe, in which he drinks the oblivion of all his past sorrows. And it is very much the case in Mexico at present, that the most distinguished men are those who live most retired ; those who have played their part on the arena of public life, have seen the inutility of their efforts in favor of their country, and have now retreated into the bosom of their families, where they endeavor to forget public evils in domestic retirement and literary occupation.

Amongst these may be reckoned Don Lucas Alaman, who passed many years in Europe, and in 1820, was deputy to the Spanish Cortes. Shortly after his return, he became minister of foreign relations, which high office he has filled during various seasons of difficulty.¹ He is a man of learning, and has always been a protector of art and science. In conversation he is more reserved, less brilliant and more minute than Count Cortina, always expressing his opinion with caution, but very ready and able to give information on anything in this country, uncon-

¹ He is now, September, 1842, once more filling the same situation under General Santa Anna.

nected with politics. General Moran, now infirm and long since retired from public service, is universally respected both as a military man and a gentleman. He is married to a daughter of the late Marquis de Vivanco, general of division, who long held out against the independence, and when the colonial system was dissolved, would never go further than to desire a prince of royal birth in Mexico. General Moran has been exiled several times, and his health has not held out against bodily and mental suffering; but he is ending his days in a tranquil retirement in the midst of his family. Of General Almonte and of Señor Cañedo, who are figuring in public life in our own day, I have frequently written.

Señor Neri del Barrio and the Count de Casaflores, married to sisters, ladies of high birth, the eldest a countess in her own right, are, as well as their families, all that is most distinguished in Mexico. Señor Fagoaga, who is now in bad health, I know only by reputation. He is brother of the Marquis of Apartado, and of the celebrated Don José Maria Fagoaga, with whose family we have the pleasure of being very intimate. C——n says, that he is a man of great taste and a thorough gentleman, and that his house, which is one of the handsomest in Mexico, possesses that ornament so rare in this country — well-chosen paintings. Don José Valentin, who has figured in the political world, and who was curate of Huamautla, is one of the kindest and best old men I have ever met with; so severe to himself, so indulgent to others — so simple in worldly matters, so learned in everything else — so sincere, good, and

charitable. He is a universal favorite with young and old, being cheerful, fond of music and of gay conversation, in proportion as he is wise and learned in his observations, and serious in his conversation when the occasion requires it. Doctor Valentin as an ecclesiastic, and Padre Leon as a monk, are models.

As for Don Francisco Tagle, he is a gentleman of the old school, and his name figures in all the political events which have taken place since the Independence, of which he was one of the signers. He is very rich, possessing besides a profitable maguey estate near Mexico, enormous property bounding Texas, and being also the keeper of the Monte Pio, formerly the house of Cortes, a palace, in which he and his family live. He is a man of great learning and information, and too distinguished not to have suffered personally in political convulsions. Whether he would choose the same path, with his present experience of a Mexican republic, he is too wise to mention. He and his family are amongst our most intimate friends, and with a few exceptions all those whom I have mentioned have been here since our return, which is one of the reasons why their names occurred first to my memory ; for there are still many distinguished persons remaining.

Nearly all these, at least all who are married, have had the good fortune to unite themselves with women who are either their equals or superiors, if not in education, — in goodness, elevation of sentiment and natural talent. They, as well as every Mexican, whether man or woman, not under forty, have lived

under the Spanish government ; have seen the revolution of Dolores of 1810, with continuations and variations by Morelos, and paralización in 1819 ; the revolution of Yturbide in 1821 ; the cry of Liberty, (grito de Libertad) given by those generals “bene-meritos de la patria,” Santa Anna and Victoria, in 1822 ; the establishment of the federal system in 1824 ; the horrible revolution of the Acordada, in which Mexico was pillaged, in 1828 ; the adoption of the central system in 1836 ; and the last revolution of the federalists in 1840. Another is predicted for next month, as if it were an eclipse of the sun. In nineteen years, three forms of government have been tried, and two constitutions, the reform of one of which is still pending in the Chambers. “*Dere is notink like trying !*” (as the old *perruquier* observed, when he set out in a little boat, to catch the royal yacht, still in sight of Scottish shores, with a new wig of his own invention, which he had trusted to have been permitted to present to his most gracious majesty George the Fourth !)

LETTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

New minister — San Angel — Profitable pulque estate — The village — Surrounding scenery — The Indians — The *padre* — The climate — Holy week in the country — Dramatic representations — Coyohuacan — The Pharisees — Image of the Saviour — Music and dresses — Procession — Catholicism amongst the Indians — Strange tradition — Paul the Fifth — Contrast between a Mexican and a New England village — Love of fireworks — Ferdinand the Seventh — Military ball — *Drapeaux*.

SAN ANGEL, March 30th.

It is a long while since I last wrote ; but this week has been employed in moving into the country, and making arrangements for the sale of our furniture, in consequence of our having received official news from Spain of the nomination of a new envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the Republic of Mexico. As, on account of the yellow fever in Vera Cruz, we shall not wish to pass through that city later than May, it is necessary to be in readiness to start when the new minister arrives. On Thursday last, we came out to this place within three leagues of Mexico, where Don Francisco Tagle has kindly lent us his unoccupied country house. As we had an infinity of arrangements to make — much to bring out, and much to leave, and *all Mexico* to see, you

will excuse this long silence. Our house in town we leave to the guardianship of the housekeeper — the other servants follow us here.

This house is very large, and has a fine garden and orchard full of fruit, with pretty walks all through it, and a sort of underwood of roses and sweet pease. It is a great pulque hacienda, and besides what is sent into Mexico for sale, the court is constantly filled with the half-naked Indians from the village, who come to have their *jarros* filled with that inspiring beverage. Then there is Doña Barbara, the guardian of the pulque — a Spanish administrador, a number of good-looking Indian women, and babies *à discretion*. There is a small chapel, a piazza, with handsome pillars going all round the interior courtyard of the house — a billiard-table, and plenty of good rooms. In front of the house are the maguey-fields, and the azotea commands a beautiful view of the neighboring villages, San Angel, Coyohuacan, Miscuaque, &c., with their woods and gardens, as well as of the city itself, with its lakes and volcanoes.

As C——n's affairs take him to Mexico nearly every day, we feel a little lonely in this large house, even though perfectly comfortable; and besides the extreme stillness and solitude, it is not considered safe for us to walk out alone; consequently the orchard must bound our wishes. And, of course, being prohibited from going further, we have the greatest desire to do so! In the evening, however, when our *caballeros* return, we frequently walk down to the village, where the English Minister has also a house.

San Angel is pretty in its own way, with its fields

of maguey, its scattered houses, that look like the *beaux restes* of better days, its market-place, parish church, church of El Carmen, with the Mona tery and high-walled gardens adjoining ; with its narrow lanes, Indian huts, profusion of pink roses, little bridge and avenue, and scattered clusters of trees ; its houses for *temperamento* (*constitution*, as they call those where Mexican families come to reside in summer), with their grated windows, and gardens and orchards. And then the distant view of Mexico, with the cathedral towers, volcanoes, and lofty mountains, scattered churches and long lines of trees ; and nearer, the pretty villages of Coyohuacan and Mis-cuaque ; and everywhere the old church, the broken arch, the ancient cross with its faded flower-garlands to commemorate a murder, or erected as an act of piety — all is so characteristic of Mexico, that the landscape could belong to no other part of the known world.

There is the Indian with his blanket, extracting the pulque from the maguey ; the *ranchero*, with her reboso and broad-brimmed hat, passing by upon her ass ; the old *lépero*, in rags, sitting basking in the sun upon the stone seat in front of the door ; the poor Indian woman, with matted hair and brown baby hanging behind her, refreshing herself by drinking three *clacos* (halfpence) worth of pulque from a *jarrito* (little earthen jar) ; the portly and well-looking padre prior del Carmen (the Carmelite prior), sauntering up the lane at a leisurely pace, all the little ragged boys, down to the merest urchin that can hardly lisp, dragging off their large, well-holed

hats, with a "*Buenos días, padrecito!*" (Good morning, little father!) — the father replying with a benevolent smile, and a slight sound in his throat intended for a *Benedicite*; and all that might be dull in any other climate, brightened and made light and gay by the purest atmosphere and bluest sky and softest air that ever blew or shone upon a naughty world.

We are now approaching the Holy Week once more; in Mexico a scene of variety in the streets and of splendor in the churches; but in the country a play, a sort of melo-drama, in which the sufferings, death, and burial of our Saviour are represented by living figures in pantomime. We have heard a great deal of these representations, and are glad to have the opportunity of seeing them, which we intend to do in the village of Coyohuacan, where they are particularly curious. Besides this, our friends the A——'s have a house there for the season, and, as the city of Cortes's predilection, it is classic ground. Meanwhile, for the last few days, the country has been overrun with Pharisees, Nazarenes, Jews, and figures of the Saviour, carried about in procession; all this in preparation for the Holy Week, a sort of overture to the drama.

The first evening we arrived here there was a representation of the Pharisees searching for Christ. The Pharisees were very finely dressed, either in scarlet stuff and gold, or in green and silver, with helmets and feathers, mounted upon horses which are taught to dance and rear to the sound of music, so that upon the whole they looked like performers at

Astley's. They came on with music, riding up the lanes till they arrived in front of this house, which being the principal place hereabouts, they came to first, and where the Indian workmen and servants were all collected to see them. They rode about for some time, as if in search of Christ, until a full length figure of the Saviour appeared, dressed in purple robes, carried on a platform by four men, and guarded on all sides by soldiers. It is singular, that after all there is nothing ridiculous in these exhibitions; on the contrary, something rather terrible. In the first place, the music is good, which would hardly be the case in any but a Mexican village, the dresses are really rich, the gold all real, and the whole has the effect of confusing the imagination into the belief of its being a true scene.

The next evening the same procession passed, with some additions, always accompanied by a crowd of Indians from the villages, men, women and children. Bonfires were made before the door of the hacienda, which were lighted whenever the distant music was heard approaching, and all the figures in the procession carried lighted lamps. The Saviour was then led up to the door, and all the crowd went up to kiss his feet. The figure which is carried about this evening is called "Our Saviour of the Column," and represents the Saviour tied to a pillar, bleeding and crowned with thorns. All this must sound very profane, but the people are so quiet, seem so devout and so much in earnest, that it appears much less so than you would believe. . . .

The cross was planted here in a congenial soil,

and as in the Pagan East the statues of the divinities frequently did no more than change their names from those of heathen gods to those of Christian saints, and image worship apparently continued, though the mind of the Christian was directed from the being represented to the true and only God who inhabits eternity, so here the poor Indian still bows before visible representations of Saints and Virgins, as he did in former days before the monstrous shapes representing the unseen powers of the air, the earth, and the water ; but he, it is to be feared, lifts his thoughts no higher than the rude image which a rude hand has carved. The mysteries of Christianity, to affect his untutored mind, must be visibly represented to his eyes. He kneels before the bleeding image of the Saviour who died for him, before the gracious form of the Virgin who intercedes for him ; but he believes that there are many Virgins, of various gifts, and possessing various degrees of miraculous power and different degrees of wealth, according to the quality and number of the diamonds and pearls with which they are endowed — one even who is the rival of the other ; one who will bring rain when there is drought, and one to whom it is well to pray in seasons of inundation. Mexico owes much of its peculiar beauty to the religious or superstitious feelings of its inhabitants. At every step we see a white cross gleaming amongst the trees, in a solitary path, or on the top of some rugged and barren rock, a symbol of faith in the desert place ; and wherever the footsteps of man have rested, and some three or four have gathered together, — there,

while the ruined hut proclaims the poverty of the inmates, the temple of God rises in comparative splendor.

It is strange, yet well authenticated, and has given rise to many theories, that the symbol of the cross was already known to the Indians before the arrival of Cortes. In the island of Cozumel, near Yucatan, there were several ; and in Yucatan itself, there was a stone cross ; and there, an Indian, considered a prophet among his countrymen, had declared that a nation bearing the same, as a symbol, should arrive from a distant country ! More extraordinary still was a temple dedicated to the Holy Cross by the Toltec nation in the city of Cholula. Near Tulancingo also, there is a cross engraved on a rock, with various characters, which the Indians by tradition attribute to the apostle Saint Thomas. In Oajaca also, there existed a cross which the Indians from time immemorial had been accustomed to consider as a divine symbol. By order of the Bishop Cervantes, it was placed in a sumptuous chapel in the cathedral. Information concerning its discovery, together with a small cross cut out of its wood, was sent to Rome to Paul the Fifth, who received it on his knees, singing the hymn, "*Vexilla Regis prodeunt*," &c.

If any one wishes to try the effect of strong contrast, let him come direct from the United States to this country ; but it is in the villages especially that the contrast is most striking. Travelling in New England, for example, we arrive at a small and flourishing village. We see four new churches, proclaiming four different sects ; religion suited to all

customers. These wooden churches or meeting-houses are all new, all painted white, or perhaps a bright red. Hard by is a tavern with a green paling, as clean and as new as the churches, and there are also various smart *stores* and neat dwelling-houses; all new, all wooden, all clean, and all ornamented with slight Grecian pillars. The whole has a cheerful, trim and flourishing aspect. Houses, churches, stores and taverns, all are of a piece. They are suited to the present emergency, whatever that may be, though they will never make fine ruins. Every thing proclaims prosperity, equality, consistency; the past forgotten, the present all in all, and the future taking care of itself. No delicate attentions to posterity, who can never pay its debts. No beggars. If a man has even a hole in his coat, he must be lately from the Emerald Isle.

Transport yourself in imagination from this New England village to that of —, it matters not which, not far from Mexico. "Look on this picture, and on that." The Indian huts, with their half-naked inmates, and little gardens full of flowers; the huts themselves either built of clay, or the half-ruined *beaux restes* of some stone building. At a little distance an hacienda, like a deserted palace, built of solid masonry, with its inner *patio* surrounded by thick stone pillars, with great walls and iron-barred windows that might stand a siege. Here a ruined arch and cross, so solidly built, that one cannot but wonder how the stones ever crumbled away. There, rising in the midst of old faithful-looking trees, the church, grey and ancient, but strong as if

designed for eternity ; with its saints and virgins and martyrs and relics, its gold and silver and precious stones, whose value would buy up all the spare lots in the New England village ; the lépero with scarce a rag to cover him, kneeling on that marble pavement. Leaving the enclosure of the church, observe the stone wall that bounds the road for more than a mile ; the fruit trees overtopping it, high though it be, with their loaded branches. This is the convent orchard. And that great gothic pile of building, that stands in hoary majesty, surmounted by the lofty mountains, whose cloud-enveloped summits, tinged by the evening sun, rise behind it ; what could so noble a building be but the monastery, perhaps of the Carmelites, because of its exceeding rich garden, and well-chosen site, for they, of all monks, are richest in this world's goods. Also we may see the reverend old prior riding slowly from under the arched gate up the village lanes, the Indians coming from their huts to do him lowly reverence as he passes. Here, everything reminds us of the past ; of the conquering Spaniards, who seemed to build for eternity ; impressing each work with their own solid, grave and religious character ; of the triumphs of catholicism ; and of the Indians when Cortes first startled them from their repose, and stood before them like the fulfilment of a half-forgotten prophecy. It is the present that seems like a dream, a pale reflection of the past. All is decaying and growing fainter, and men seem trusting to some unknown future which they may never see. One government has been abandoned, and there is none in its place.

One revolution follows another ; yet the remedy is not found. Let them beware lest half a century later, they be awakened from their delusion, and find the cathedral turned into a meeting-house, and all painted white ; the *railing* melted down ; the silver transformed into dollars ; the virgin's jewels sold to the highest bidder ; the floor washed, (which would do it no harm) and round the whole, a nice new wooden paling, freshly done in green — and all this performed by some of the artists from the *wide-awake* republic further north.

Just as I wrote these words, a shower of crackers startled me from the profane ideas in which I was indulging, and the prancing of the horses of Jews and Pharisees, and the crackling of bonfires, warn me that it is time to take an evening stroll, that the sun is down, and the air refreshing. However, as to crackers and rockets, the common people enjoy them by day as much as by night. It is their favorite method of commemorating any event, civil or religious. “ What do you suppose the Mexicans will be doing now ? ” said King Ferdinand to a Mexican who was at the Spanish court, shortly after the final success of the Revolutionists. “ Letting off rockets, your Majesty,” answered the Mexican. “ Well — I wonder what they are doing now in Mexico ! ” said the King in the afternoon, “ *Tirando cohetes* — letting off rockets, your Majesty.” His Majesty chose to repeat the question in the evening. “ What will your countrymen be doing now ? ” “ The same thing, your Majesty. Still letting off rockets.”

Yesterday we drove into Mexico, to see how mat-

ters stood in our house, and received a number of visitors in our deserted apartments. Just before we left Mexico for this place, three very magnificent aids-de-camp brought us an invitation from General Valencia, to attend a ball to be given by him and other officers, in the theatre, to the President, on the occasion of His Excellency's being declared "bene-merito de la patria." We did not go, as we were setting off for the country, but C——n being requested, as were the other Ministers, to send the colors of his nation, did so, and to-day there is much talk in Mexico, besides a paragraph in the newspapers, connected with these matters. It appears that the *drapeaux*, whether by accident or design, were improperly placed, and these faults in etiquette are not uncommon here. The English Minister having observed that his drapeau was placed in a subordinate rank, and finding that his warnings beforehand on the subject, and his representations on seeing it were neglected, cut it down and left the ball-room, followed by all the English who were there.

LETTER THE THIRTY-NINTH.

Holy Thursday at Coyohuacan — Hernan Cortes — His last wishes — *Padres Camilas* — Old church — Procession — Representation of the taking of Christ — Curate's sermon under the trees — A religious drama — Good Friday — Portable pulpit — Heat — Booths — Religious procession — Simon the Cyrenian — Costumes — Curate's sermon — Second discourse — Sentence pronounced by Pontius Pilate — Descent from the cross — Procession of the Angels — Funeral hymn — The *pe-same* to the Virgin — Sermon — "Sweet Kitty Clover" — Music in Mexico — Anecdote.

ON Holy Thursday we went early in the morning to Coyohuacan, (now pronounced Cuyacan) which is almost a continuation of the village of San Angel; but there are more trees in it, and every house has its garden, or at least its inner court, filled with orange trees. Here, after the total destruction of the ancient Tenochtitlan, Cortes took up his residence for several months. Here he founded a convent of nuns, and in his testament he desired to be buried in this convent, "in whatever part of the world I may finish my days." The conqueror's last wishes in this respect were not held sacred. At the time of the conquest, Coyohuacan, together with Tacubaya, Tacuba, &c., stood upon the margin of the Lake of Tezcuco; most of the houses built within the water upon stakes, so that the canoes entered by a low door. This was undoubtedly the favorite retreat

of Cortes, and it is now one of the prettiest villages near Mexico. Its church is wonderfully handsome; one of the finest village churches we have yet seen.

One of the prettiest places in the village belongs to an order of monks called the *Padres Camilos*. It consists of a house and garden, where the monks go by turns to enjoy the country air. Comfortable padres! There is one room looking into the garden, and opening into a walk bordered by rose-bushes, which is such a place for a siesta; cool, retired, fragrant. A hammock with a mattress on it is slung across the room, and here the good padre may lie, with one eye opened to the roses, and the other closed in inward meditation. However, its whole merit consists in being cleanly and neatly kept, for it is a large, empty house, and the garden, so called, is little more than a pasture-field, with nice gravel walks cut through it, bordered with fine rose-bushes, and beautified by a clear fountain.

We went to the A——s house, which is half way between San Angel and Coyohuacan; the Señora A—— driving me herself in an open carratela with white *frisones* (northern horses) which, compared with the spirited little Mexican steeds, look gigantic. We went first to see the church, which was brilliantly illuminated, and ornamented with loads of flowers and fruit, (especially oranges) and thronged with ragged léperos and blanketed Indians. We then set off to endeavor, if possible, to find a place in the crowd, who had hurried off to see *el prendimiento*, (the taking of Christ) and to hear the curate preach an appropriate sermon in a portable pulpit, amongst the trees.

We made our way through the patient, bronzed and blanketed crowd, not without sundry misgivings as to the effects of *evil communication*; and at length reached the procession, all ranged on the grass under the trees, in a pretty and secluded little grove; in two long rows fronting each other; each person carrying a lamp surmounted by a plume of colored feathers, very ingeniously made of colored spun glass. They were all dressed in the costume of Pharisees, Jews, Romans, &c. The image of the Saviour was shortly after carried through on a platform, to the sound of music, followed by the eleven disciples, and was placed in a kind of bower amongst the trees, supposed to give a representation of the garden of Gethsemane. A portable pulpit, covered with shining stuff, was carried in, and placed beneath a tree just outside of this enclosure, and soon after, the curate arrived, and mounted into his place. A number of little ragged boys, who had climbed up on the very topmost branches of the trees, to have a good view, were *piked* down with lances by the Jews, notwithstanding their seemingly just remonstrances that they were doing no harm; but when the Jews observed in answer to their “*Que hacemos?*” “*What are we doing?*” — “*The Señor Cura will be angry;*” — they tumbled down one on the top of the other like ripe apples, and then stood watching for the first convenient opportunity of slipping up again.

The curate began his sermon by an account of the sufferings and persecution of Christ; of the causes and effects of his death, of the sinfulness of

the Jews, &c. He talked for about half an hour, and his sermon was simple enough and adapted to his audience. He described the agony of Christ when in the garden to which he often resorted with his disciples, and the treachery of Judas who knew the place, and who "*having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.*" As he went on describing the circumstances minutely, one who represented the spy, with a horrible mask like a pig's face, was seen looking through the trees where the Saviour was concealed; and shortly after, Judas, his face covered with a black crape, and followed by a band of soldiers, glided through stealthily. "Now," said the curate, "observe what the traitor does. He hath given them a sign, saying; "*Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he — Hold him fast.* He goes — he approaches the sacred person of the Lord." Here Judas went forward and embraced the Saviour. "It is done!" cried the preacher. "The horrible act of treachery is completed. *And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail Master, and kissed him. But now, Jesus knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he.*" As the curate said these words, they all fell prostrate on the ground. "Mark," cried he, "the power of the Word! They came out to take him with swords and with staves, but at the sound of the Divine Word, they acknowledge the power of God, and fall at His feet. But it is only for a moment.

Behold, now they bind him, they buffet him, they smite him with the palms of their hands, they lead him away to the high priest.

All this was enacted in succession ; though sometimes the curate was obliged to repeat the same thing several times before they recollected what to do. “ And already, in anticipation of the iniquitous sentence, behold what is written.” This alluded to a paper fastened upon a pole, which a man held above the heads of the crowd, and on which was written, “ Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, condemned to death by Pontius Pilate, President of Upper Galilee.”

And now, escorted by Judas and the multitude, the Saviour was borne through the crowd, in conclusion of the *prendimiento*. The curate wound up his discourse by an exhortation to abstain from sin, which had been the cause of this awful event. I regret to state that at this very moment, a man poked his hand into A——’s pocket, who turned very sharply round, and asked him what he wanted ; “ Nada, Señorito ; ” (nothing, sir,) said he with an innocent smile, showing two rows of teeth like an ivory railing, but at the same time disappearing pretty swiftly amongst the crowd ; who now all began to move, and to follow the procession, the band striking up a *gallope*. In the evening we returned to San Angel, and visited the lighted churches there. As it was late when we entered the *parroquia*, (parish church) the lights were nearly all extinguished, and a few alone of the devout were still kneeling before a figure of our Saviour in chains. . . .

On Good Friday, we set off early for Coyohuacan, though rather afraid of the sun, which at present, in the middle of the day, is insupportable, and even by ten o'clock disagreeable. The whole enclosure round the church, and to a great distance beyond it, was covered with people, and there were even a few carriages full of well-dressed persons who had come from the different neighboring haciendas ; amongst others the family of the Marquesa de Vivanco. The padre Yturalde, who has some reputation for eloquence, was expected to preach three sermons at Coyohuacan that day, besides one in the village of Mizcuaque. We found that one sermon was just concluded. By the time we arrived, the sun was pouring down his beams like molten lead. Our carriage was open, and under every tree was a crowd, so there were small hopes of finding shade. Women were selling fruit ; and booths with ices and *chia* were erected all down the lane leading from the church. At last, however, a little room was made, and seats were placed for us close to the pulpit, and under a tree.

The image of the Saviour was now carried forwards on a platform ; with the heavy cross appearing to weigh him down ; and on the same platform was Simon the Cyrenian, assisting him to bear the weight. The Cyrenian was represented by an old man, with hair as white as snow, dressed in scarlet cloth ; who, in a stooping posture, and without once moving his body, was carried about for hours in the whole force of the sun, the rays pouring down upon his uncovered head. For a long while, we had be-

lieved him to be a wooden figure dressed up, and when he came near, he greatly excited our surprise and compassion. If he survives this day's work, it will be a miracle. I can now almost give faith to ——'s assertion, that in some of the villages, the man who represents Judas, actually hangs himself, or is hanged upon a tree ! The Saviour was dressed in crimson velvet, with the crown of thorns ; and a figure of the Virgin, in deep mourning, was carried after him by Indian women.

The procession consisted of the same men on horseback, as we had seen on foot the preceding day ; of the Spy, the Pharisees, the Jews, the Betrayer and the mob. Some had helmets and feathers, and armor. Some wore wreaths of green and gold leaves. One very good-looking man, with long curls and a gold crown, and a splendid mantle of scarlet and gold, was intended for a Roman. By his crown, he probably meant to personify the Roman Cæsar. The sermon, or rather the discourse of the padre, was very good, and appeared to be extempore. He made an address to the Virgin, who was carried by and led up to the pulpit, and another to the Saviour, during which time the audience was breathlessly attentive, notwithstanding the crying of children and the barking of dogs. It was supposed that they were now leading Christ before the judgment seat of Pilate, and the next scene was to be the delivery of the sentence.

When the curate's discourse was finished, the procession went on ; the Indian women began to sell their nuts and oranges, and the band struck up an

air in the distance, to which, when last I heard it, Ducrow's horses were dancing! We, in a fiery sun, which made its way through our mantillas, now proceeded to search for a convenient place from which to hear the padre's next sermon, and to see the next scene in the sacred drama. The padre, who was walking under the shade of a lilac silk parasol, insisted upon resigning it to me. The Señora — did not seem to feel the heat at all. At last, in order to avoid the crowd, we got up on the low azotea of a house, beside which the pulpit was placed; but here the sun was overwhelming.

The padre's sermon was really eloquent in some passages, but lasted nearly an hour, during which time we admired the fortitude of the unhappy Cyrenian, who was dreeing a penance of no ordinary kind. The sun darted down perpendicularly on the back of his exposed head, which he kept bent downwards, maintaining the same posture the whole time without flinching or moving. Before the sermon was over, we could stand the heat no longer, and went in under cover. I felt as if my brains were melted into a hot jelly. We emerged upon hearing that the procession was again moving towards the pulpit, where it shortly after formed itself into two lines. In a few moments, a man with a plumed helmet, mounted on a fiery horse, galloped furiously through the ranks, holding a paper on the point of his lance, the sentence pronounced by Pontius Pilate.

Arrived at the pulpit, he handed it up to the priest, who received it with a look of horror, opened it, tried to read it, and threw it on the ground with an air of

indignation. The messenger galloped back more furiously than he came, and his horse bolting at the end of the lines, occasioned a laugh amongst the spectators. Then followed the parting address to the Saviour, whose bearers now brought him up to the pulpit, followed by the mournful figure of the Virgin. Reflections on the event concluded this act.

We returned in the afternoon, to see the descent from the cross, which was to be performed within the church. The church was crowded, and a black curtain hung before the altar. The padre now recapitulated all that had taken place, and described the Saviour's parting with his mother at the foot of the cross, addressing the Virgin who stood in her sable robes not far from the altar, and interrupting his sermon to pray for her intercession with her Divine Son. I observed all the women in tears as he described the Virgin's grief, the torments of the crucifixion, the indignities that the Saviour had suffered. All at once he exclaimed in a loud voice, "Draw back the veil, and let us behold Him!" The curtain was drawn, and the Saviour crucified appeared. Then the sobs of the women broke forth. They clasped their hands, beat their breasts and groaned; while the soldiers who stood below the cross, clashed their swords, and one of them struck the body with a lance. At the same time the Virgin bowed her head as if in grief. Unfortunately I was near enough to see how this was effected, which peep behind the scenes greatly diminished the effect.

Then the soldiers mounted a ladder near the crucifix, and took down the body, to bear it away. As

it came by the pulpit, the priest seized the hands, and showed the marks of the nails, at the same time breaking out into exclamations of grief. The soldiers stood below, impatiently clashing their swords; the women sobbed violently; the procession passed on, and we returned to the A——s house.

In the evening, the "Procession of the Angels" took place. Figures dressed in silk and gold, with silver wings, were carried by on platforms to the sound of music. The body of the Saviour lay in a sort of glass hearse, carried by men chanting a dirge, and followed by the Virgin. This procession was really pretty, but had an odd, unnatural effect amongst the fresh green trees, the smell of incense mingling with the fragrance of the flowers, and the gaudy silk and gold and plumes of feathers gilded by the soft setting sun, as they flashed along. I climbed up on an old stone cross near the church, and had a good view. Everything looked gaudy when near; but as the procession wound along under the broken arches and through the green lanes, and the music came fainter upon the ear, and the beating of drums and the tolling of bells and the mournful chant were all blended into one faint and distant harmony, the effect was beautiful. I thought of the simple service of the Scottish kirk, and of the country people coming out after a sermon, with their best Sunday gowns on, and their serious, intelligent faces, discussing the merits of their minister's discourse; and wondered at the contrasts in the same religion. . . .

As the evening was cool and pleasant, we walked through the fields to the church of La Concepcion,

where the procession was to pass, and sat down on the grass till we heard it coming. As the body was carried by, all went on their knees. At night commenced the *pesame*, or condolence to the Virgin, in the church. She stood on her shrine, with her head bowed down; and the hymns and prayers were all addressed to her, while the sermon, preached by another *cura*, was also in her honor. I plead guilty to having been too sleepy to take in more than the general tenor of the discourse. The musicians seemed to be playing "Sweet Kitty Clover," with variations. If Sweet Kitty Clover is genuine Irish, as who can doubt, how did these Indians get hold of it? Did Saint Patrick go round from the Emerald Isle by way of Tipperary? But if he had, would he not have killed the *alacrans*, and *chicaclinos*, and *coralillos*, and *vinagrillos*? This requires consideration.

In the *Ora pro nobis*, we were struck with the fineness of the rustic voices. But music in this country is a sixth sense. It was but a few days before leaving Mexico, that, sitting alone at the open window, enjoying the short twilight, I heard a sound of distant music; many voices singing in parts, and coming gradually nearer. It sounded beautiful, and exactly in unison with the hour and the scene. At first I concluded it to be a religious procession; but it was not a hymn — the air was gayer. When the voices came under the window, and rose in full cadence, I went out on the balcony to see to whom they belonged. It was the *forçats*, returning from their work to the *Acordada*! guarded by soldiers,

their chains clanking in measure to the melody, and accompanied by some miserable-looking women.

We left the church feeling very tired and sleepy, and walked towards the booths, where, in the midst of flowers and evergreens, they were still selling ices, and lemonade and *chia*. We sat down to rest in the cleanest of these leafy bowers, and then returned to Coyohuacan. There was no drunkenness, or quarrelling, or confusion of any sort. An occasional hymn, rising in the silence of the air, or the distant flashing of a hundred lights, alone gave notice that the funeral procession of the Saviour had not yet halted for the night ; but there was no noise, not even mirth. Everything was conducted with a sobriety befitting the event that was celebrated. That some of the curate's horses were stolen that night, is only a proof that bad men were out, and took the opportunity of his absence from home to plunder his stables. We were told an anecdote concerning Simon the Cyrenian, which is not bad. A man was taken up in one of the villages as a vagrant, and desired by the justice to give an account of himself — to explain why he was always wandering about, and had no employment. The man, with the greatest indignation replied ; “ No employment ! I am *substitute Cyrenian* at Coyohuacan in the Holy Week ! ” That is to say, he was to be substituted in the Cyrenian's place, should anything occur to prevent that individual from representing the character.

LETTER THE FORTIETH.

Balloon — San Bartolo — Indian women — A beauty — Different castes — Indians — Their character, &c. — Those of noble race — Ball at the French minister's — *Abecilla* — Danger of walking unattended — Shooting party — A murder — Robbery of a farm house — Discomfited robber captain — The "*Zambos*" — Letters and visiters — Country life in Mexico.

23d April.

WE went to Mexico yesterday to see a balloon ascend from the Plaza de Toros, with an aëronaut and his daughter; French people, I believe. The scene was really beautiful. The plaza was filled with well-dressed people, and all the boxes crowded with ladies in full toilette. The President was there with his staff, and there were two bands of music. The day was perfectly brilliant, and the streets crowded with handsome carriages, many of them open. The balloon swayed itself up and down in the midst of the plaza like a living thing. Everything seemed ready for the ascent, when it was announced that there was a hole in the balloon, and that consequently there could be no ascent that day. The people bore their disappointment very good-humoredly, although it was conjectured that the *air traveller* had merely proposed to himself to get their money, without the slightest intention of performing

his voyage. One amusing circumstance was, that some penny-a-line rhymer had written an account of it in verse beforehand, giving a most grandiloquent account of the ascent of the balloon ; and when we came out, the plaza was full of men selling these verses, which the people were all buying and reading with roars of laughter.

The first of May being *San Felipe*, there will be a ball at the French Minister's, to which we shall probably go.

25th. — We have just returned from a ride to San Bartolo, an Indian village, four leagues from this, where we went with a large party, some on horses, some on asses, others on mules, and one adventurous Jehu driving himself in a four-wheeled carriage, with a pair of horses, over a road formed of ruts, stones, holes and rocks, where, I will venture to say, no carriage ever made its appearance before. Even the horses and asses got along with difficulty. In spite of large straw hats and green veils, we were burnt the color of red Indians. In the middle of the day, we find the sun intolerable at present, and owing to the badness of the roads, we did not reach our destination until twelve or one o'clock.

San Bartolo is a small, scattered Indian village, with a church, and is remarkable for a beautiful spring of water, that jets cold and clear from the hard rock, as if Moses had but just smote it ; for its superb tall pine trees ; for the good looks and cleanliness of the Indian women, who are forever washing their long hair in the innumerable clear streamlets formed by the spring ; and for a view of Mexico,

which is particularly favorable, owing to the thick, dark screen of pine wood in the foreground, and the distinct view of the Laguna. Our dinner was carried by Indians, who had trotted off with it at day-dawn ; but who had taken the wrong road, and did not arrive till long after us. We dined under the pine trees by the side of the stream, but surrounded by crowds of gaping Indians, in too close vicinity to be agreeable. Some of the young women were remarkably handsome, with the most beautiful teeth imaginable, laughing and talking in their native tongue at a great rate, as they were washing in the brooks, some their hair and others their clothes. The men looked as dirty as Indians generally do, and by no means on a level with these handsome damsels, who are so much superior to the common race of Indians near Mexico, that one would think they had some intermixture of Spanish blood in their veins. A sister of the woman who takes charge of the hacienda where we live, is one of the most beautiful creatures I ever beheld. Large eyes with long dark lashes, black hair nearly touching the ground, teeth like snow, a dark but glowing complexion, a superb figure, with fine arms and hands, and small beautifully-formed feet. All that is best of Indian and Spanish, “ of dark and bright,” seems united in her. C——n says he has seen peasant women in Andalusia in the same style of beauty, and quite as handsome. She is only nineteen. Such beauties as these startle one every now and then in some remote village. She belongs no doubt to the *mestizos* — the descendants of whites and Indians, the handsomest race in Mexico.

You ask if the castes in Mexico are distinct. There are seven supposed to be so. 1st, the Gachupinos, or Spaniards born in Europe ; 2d, the Creoles, that is whites of European family born in America ; 3d, the Mestizos ; 4th, the Mulattoes, descendants of whites and negroes, of whom there are few ; 5th, the Zambos, descendants of negroes and Indians, the ugliest race in Mexico ; 6th, the Indians ; and 7th, the remains of the African negroes.

Of pure Indians, Humboldt in his day calculated that there existed two millions and a half in New Spain, (without counting mestizos) and they are probably very little altered from the inferior Indians as Cortes found them. The principal families perished at the time of the conquest. The priests, sole depositaries of knowledge, were put to death ; the manuscripts and hieroglyphical paintings were burnt, and the remaining Indians fell into that state of ignorance and degradation, from which they have never emerged. The rich Indian women preferred marrying their Spanish conquerors to allying themselves with the degraded remnant of their countrymen ; poor artisans, workmen, porters, &c. of whom Cortes speaks as filling the streets of the great cities, and as being considered little better than beasts of burthen ; nearly naked *in tierra caliente*, dressed pretty much as they now are in the temperate parts of the country ; and everywhere with nearly the same manners and habits and customs as they now have, but especially in the more distant villages where they have little intercourse with the other classes. Even in their religion, Christianity, as I observed before,

seems to be formed of the ruins of their mythology ; and all these festivities of the church, these fireworks and images and gay dresses, harmonize completely with their childish love of show, and are in fact their greatest source of delight. To buy these they save up all their money, and when you give a penny to an Indian child, it trots off to buy crackers, as another would to buy candy. Attempts have been made by their curates to persuade them to omit the celebration of certain days, and to expend less in the ceremonies of others ; but the indignation and discontent which such proposals have caused, have induced them to desist in their endeavors.

Under an appearance of stupid apathy they veil a great depth of cunning. They are grave and gentle and rather sad in their appearance, when not under the influence of pulque ; but when they return to their villages in the evening, and have taken a drop of comfort, their white teeth light up their bronze countenances like lamps, and the girls especially make the air ring with their laughter, which is very musical. I think it is Humboldt who says that their smile is extremely gentle, and the expression of their eyes very severe. As they have no beard, if it were not for a little moustache, which they frequently wear on the upper lip, there would be scarcely any difference between the faces of men and women.

The Indians in and near the capital are, according to Humboldt, either the descendants of the former laborers, or are remains of noble Indian families, who, disdaining to intermarry with their Spanish conquerors, preferred themselves to till the ground

which their vassals formerly cultivated for them. It is said that these Indians of noble race, though to the vulgar eye undistinguishable from their fellows, are held in great respect by their inferior countrymen. In Cholula, particularly, there are still Caciques with long Indian names; also in Tlascala — and though barefoot and ragged, they are said to possess great hidden wealth. But it is neither in nor near the capital that we can see the Indians to perfection in their original state. It is only by travelling through the provinces that we can accomplish this; and should the lateness of the season oblige us to remain here any time after another Minister arrives, we may probably take a longer journey in some different direction from tierra caliente, where we may see some tribes of the indigenous Mexicans. Certainly no visible improvement has taken place in their condition since the independence. They are quite as poor and quite as ignorant and quite as degraded as they were in 1808, and if they do raise a little grain of their own, they are so hardly taxed that the privilege is as nought.

2d May. — We returned from Mexico this morning, having gone in to attend the ball given at the French Minister's, on the day of Louis Philippe. It was very pretty, and we staid till it was very late. We met with such a cordial reception from all our friends, whom we have not seen for a month, that we are tempted to believe ourselves as much missed in Mexico as they say we are. The Señora L—— and the E——s were amongst the best dressed Mexican ladies last night; the latter in white crape and dia-

monds, and the other in black blonde over rose color, also with diamonds. The Señora A——, who went with us, looked very pretty in a white blonde dress, with a small black velvet turban rolled round with large diamonds and pearls. There were a great number of small crimson velvet turbans, and an amazing number of black blonde dresses. There were certainly some very pretty women. The corps diplomatique went in uniform.

7th. — Abecilla, a favorite Spanish actor, died a few days ago, and, as C——n took several boxes on the night of a play given for the benefit of his widow, we went in to the theatre on Saturday last. We are now looking out for another house in Mexico, for when the rainy season begins, we shall find this too far from the city for C——n, who is obliged to be there constantly.

We ventured to take a walk alone yesterday morning through the lanes, down to San Angel and Coyohuacan, for which piece of imprudence we were severely reprehended, and to-day it appears that two women have been robbed and ill-treated on the road, near here ; so we are too ready to subscribe to the renewal of our sentence of imprisonment in the house and orchard, when we have no gentlemen with us ; but it must be confessed, that it takes greatly from the charms of a country life, not to be able to walk out fearlessly. . . .

The quietness and stillness of this place is incredible. There is actually not a sound in the air ; not a sight but a ragged Indian. The garden is in great beauty. The apricots are ripe and abundant. The

roses are in full blow ; and there is a large pomegranate tree at the gate of the orchard, which is one mass of ponceau blossom. It is much warmer in the middle of the day, this summer, than it was last.

We spent a pleasant day lately at a great hacienda a few leagues from this, belonging to a Spanish millionaire, on occasion of a shooting party. We went there to breakfast, and afterwards set off on horseback, sitting sideways on *men's* saddles, to see the sport. It would have been very agreeable but for the heat. The sportsmen were not very successful, — saw a flight of rose-colored flamingoes, who sailed high over their heads, unhurt ; killed some very handsome birds called *trigueros*, with beautiful yellow plumage, and some ducks. The *trigueros* are considered a delicacy. We rode with the administrador all round the estate, which is very productive and profitable. He told us that they sell in Mexico, annually, fifteen thousand dollars' worth of corn, and ten thousand dollars' worth of milk, sending in this produce in canoes, by the canal which passes this way. We dismounted from our horses in a green meadow covered with daisies and buttercups, which, from association, I prefer to the tuberoses and pomegranate blossom, which now adorn the gardens. The Señor — gave us an excellent dinner *à l'Espagnole* ; after which I made an attempt to fire at some birds, which shook their tails, and flew away in the most contemptuous manner. . . .

The new Secretary of Legation, Señor T——, and the new Attaché, Señor G——, have just arrived in Mexico.

10th. — The Baron and Madame de —, with their secretary, the Count de B——, came out yesterday morning unexpectedly to breakfast, and spent the day with us.

13th. — We went out with C——n last evening, to take a walk, when a man rushed by us in a state of great agitation, and on going further we met some workmen, who told us that an Indian laborer had stabbed a man in the next field, and that he had died before a padre could be procured. We heard the cries of his wife and children, and A——, crossing the ditch that bordered the field, went to see the man. He was a master-workman, or director, and had found fault with one of the men for his idleness. High words ensued, and the laborer (probably the man who had passed us) drew his knife and stabbed him. He was lying stone dead, with his hand half cut through in his efforts to defend himself. A—— asked an administrador, who was standing near, what would be done to the guilty man. “Probably nothing,” said he, shrugging his shoulders; “we have no judges to punish crime.” This rencontre, as you may believe, took away from us all inclination to pursue our rambles.

There is a pretty farm house in the village, in which we took shelter the other day from a shower of rain. The farmers are civil and respectful, a superior kind of people, with good manners rather above their station. The daughters are good looking, and the house clean and neat. One of the girls gave me an account of a nocturnal visit which the robbers paid them last winter. She showed me the

little room where she was alone and asleep, when her mother and sister, who slept in the chamber adjoining, being wakened by the breaking in of their door, sprang out of the window to make their escape, and she was left in the house alone. She jumped out of bed and bolted the door, (her room had no other egress) and there she held a parley with these night visitors, promising to unlock every drawer and closet, if they would wait till she put on her clothes, and would do her no personal injury. The agreement was made, and they kept their word. They cleared the house of every article it contained, leaving nothing but the blanket in which the girl had wrapped herself. All their clothes, household utensils, money, everything was carried off with astonishing precision; and having made her swear not to move till they had time to leave the village, they paid her no further attention. The other women, who had given the alarm, found no one inclined to move in the middle of the night against a party whose numbers their fears had probably magnified. . . .

The administrador gave us an amusing account this evening of a visit which a band of no less than thirty robbers once ventured to pay this strong and well defended hacienda. He was living there alone, that is, without the family, and had just barred and bolted everything for the night, but had not yet locked the outer gate, when looking out from his window into the court-yard by moonlight, he saw a band of robbers ride up to the door. He instantly took his measures, and seizing the great keys, ran up the little stair that leads to the azotea, locking the

gate by which he passed, and calling to the captain by name, (for the robbers were headed by a noted chieftain) requested to know what he wanted at that hour of the night. The captain politely begged him to come down stairs and he would tell him ; but the agent, strong in the possession of his great keys, and well knowing the solidity of the iron-barred windows, continued his parley in a high tone. The captain rode round, examined everything with a practised eye, and found that it would require a regular siege to make good his entry. He threatened, entreated, observed that he would be content with a small sum of money ; but all in vain. There stood the sturdy administrador on the house-top, and there sat the captain on his horse below, something like the fox and the crow ; but the agent with the keys was wiser than the crow with her cheese, for no cajoling would induce him to let them out of his grasp ; and worse than all, shooting him would have done them no good. At last the captain, finding himself entirely outwitted, took off his hat, politely wished the agent a very good night, drew off his men and departed.

Another time, being also alone, he was attacked in broad day-light by two men who came under pretence of buying pulque ; but having time to get hold of a sword, he overpowered one, which frightened the other, upon which they both began to laugh, and assured him it was mere experiment to see what he would do — a perfect jest, which he pretended to believe, but advised them not to try it again, as it was too good a joke to be repeated. Señor ——

pointed out to us the other day a well-known robber-captain, who was riding on the high road with a friend. He had the worst-looking, most vulgar and most villanous face I ever saw ; a low-lived and most unpoetic-looking ruffian ; fat and sallow.

We saw a horribly ugly man to-day, and were told he was a *lobo*, the name given here to the *Zambos* ; who are the most frightful human beings that can be seen. La Guera Rodriguez told us that on an estate of hers, one woman of that race was in the habit of attending church, and that she was so fearfully hideous, the priest had been obliged to desire her to remain at home, because she distracted the attention of the congregation !

We spent yesterday at the house of the —— Minister at San Angel, where he gave us and the —— Minister and his family a beautiful breakfast. How consistent everything looks in a good English house ! so handsome without being gaudy — the plate so well cleaned, the servants so well trained. . . .

8th June. — We were sitting under an apple tree the other day, trying to tame the fiercest little deer I ever saw, who was butting and kicking with all his might, when a large packet of letters was brought us, the reading of which insured us an agreeable afternoon. We continue to lead a very quiet life here, occasionally taking a short ride in the evening, and making acquaintance with the neighboring villages, the prettiest of which is Tesapan, a most rural and leafy spot, where there are fine fruit trees, plenty of water and good-looking peasant girls. Sometimes we go to San Antonio to see the V——o family ;

occasionally to San Agustin, where they are preparing for the great fête. We are in treaty for a house in Mexico, having now given up all idea of passing through Vera Cruz this summer. We are in hopes of having that of the late Marquesa de San Roman, who died some time ago, but the delays that take place in any transaction connected with a house in Mexico, and the difficulty of obtaining a decisive answer, are hard trials of patience.

We generally have a number of visitors from Mexico on Sunday, and those who come in carriages may be considered as real friends, for they decidedly risk their necks, not to mention their carriage-springs at a *bad bit* on the road, which the owners, who are Indians, will not allow any one to mend for them, and will not mend themselves. When we reach it, we are obliged regularly to get out of the carriage, go about a hundred yards on foot, and then remain in much anxiety at the top of the hill, till we see whether or not the carriage arrives unbroken, which it rarely does. A few dollars would make it perfectly safe.

Our chief visitors during the week are from the Carmelite Convent of San Angel. The old *padre guardian* is about eighty. Each convent has a prior, but the padre guardian exercises authority over all the convents of his order as well as over his own.

There are many excellent houses and fine gardens in San Angel, and a number of families from Mexico are now there for the season. Tacubaya and all the environs are beginning to be occupied, and Mexico looks warm and deserted. But there are so

few incidents in our quiet life among the magueys, that I shall write no more till we return from San Agustin after the fête. If you wish to hear how we pass our time, you must know that we generally rise about six, and go out into the orchard and stroll about, or sit down with a book in a pleasant arbor at the end of one of the walks, which is surrounded by rose bushes, and has a little stream of water running past it. Nor do we ever enter the orchard unarmed with a long pole, for its entrance is guarded by a flock of angry geese, hissing like the many-headed Hydra that watched over the golden apples of the Hesperides. At eight we breakfast, and by nine the sun is already powerful enough to prevent us from leaving the house. We therefore sit down to read or write, and do occasionally take a game at billiards. C——n generally rides to Mexico, but if not, goes up to the azotea with a book, or writes in his study until four o'clock, when we dine.

After dinner we walk into the village, if we have any attendant esquire ; if not, we go to the azotea and see the sun set behind the volcanoes, or walk in the garden till it is dark, and then sit down in the front of the house, and look at the lights in Mexico. Then we have tea or chocolate—and the candles are lighted—and the last Indian workman has gone off to his village—and the house is barred in, and we sit down to read, or write or talk, or sometimes we play billiards by lamp-light. And then indeed the silence and the solitude make us feel as if the world were completely shut out. I never perceived such perfect stillness. Even the barking of a dog sounds

like an event. Therefore, expect no amusing letters from this place; for though we are very comfortable, there are no incidents to relate. The Indians come in the morning to drink pulque, (which, by the way, I now think excellent, and shall find it very difficult to live without!) a little child from the village brings us some bouquets of flowers, which the Indians have a pretty way of arranging in a pine-apple, or pyramidal form; the Chinese cook, with his little slits of eyes, passes by with meat and fruit which he has been buying at the market of San Angel; the prior saunters in to see how we are — a chance visiter comes on horseback from Mexico, with a long sword by his side, as if he were going to fight the Saracens. And excepting that a padre came last Sunday and said mass to us in the pretty little chapel of the hacienda, which saved us the trouble of going down to the village, and moreover, took chocolate with us afterwards, there has been nothing to vary the usual routine of our country life.

LETTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

Gambling — Fête at San Agustin — Breakfast at San Antonio — Report — Cock-fight — Ladies — Private gambling — A *vaca* — The *Calvario* — Bonnets — Dinner — Evening ball — Mingling of classes — Copper tables — Dresses and decorations — Indian bankers, male and female — Decorum — Habit — Holders of banks — Female gambler — Robbery — Anecdote — Bet — *Casa de Moneda* — Leave San Angel — Celebration — Address — Cross and Diploma — Reply — Presentation of a sword — Discourses and addresses — Reflections.

10th June.

ONE year since I last wrote of San Agustin ! An entire year has fled swiftly away on rushing pinions, to add its unit to the rolling century. And again, on a bright morning in June, we set off for the hospitable San Antonio, where we were invited to breakfast and to pass the night on the second day of the fête. We found a very brilliant party assembled ; the family with all its branches, the Ex-Minister Cuevas, with his handsome sister-in-law, La Güera Rodriguez, with one of her beautiful grand-daughters, (daughter of the Marquis of G——e) now making her first appearance in Mexico, and various other agreeable people. The first day of the fête, a rumor was afloat that an attack was to be made on the banks by the federal party ; that they expected to procure the sinews of war to the extent of a million of dollars, and then intended to raise a *grito* in Mexico, taking

advantage of the temporary absence of the President and his officers. The plan seemed rather feasible, and the report, true or false, was current yesterday ; but if there was any truth in it, the discovery has been made in time, for nothing has occurred. San Agustin appeared even gayer and more crowded than it was last year. We spent the day at the E——s, and went with them to a box in the plaza to see the cock-fight, which I had no particular pleasure, I must confess, in witnessing again, but went for the sake of those who had not seen it before. The general *coup d'œil* was exceedingly gay, and the improvement in the dress of the ladies since last year, very striking. There were neither diamonds nor pearls amongst the most fashionable. The bonnets were chiefly Parisian, as were many of the gowns. One box looked a veritable parterre of flowers. The ladies of our party wore dresses and bonnets as simple, fresh and elegant as could be seen in any part of the world. A young and titled heiress, newly arrived from her distant estates, wore pink satin with a white hat and feathers, and we observed, that according to the ancient San Agustin fashion, she changed her dress four or five times a day. But the ladies may dress, and may smile, and may look their very best ; they are little thought of this day, in comparison with the one all-powerful, all-pervading object. It is even whispered that one cause of the more than usual crowd at San Agustin this year, is that many failures are expected in mercantile houses, and that the heads of these houses or their agents are here on the desperate hope of retrieving their falling fortunes.

A good deal of play on a small scale goes on in the private houses, among those who do not take much part in the regular gambling ; but all are interested more or less ; even strangers, even ladies, even ourselves. Occasional news is brought in, and received with deep interest, of the state of the banks, of the losses or gains of the different individuals, or of the result of the *vacas*, (a sort of general purse, into which each puts two or three ounces) by different stragglers from the gambling-houses, who have themselves only ventured a few ounces, and who prefer the society of the ladies to that of the Monte players. These are generally foreigners and chiefly English.

We found the road to the *Calvario*, where, as usual, there was a ball in the afternoon, blocked up with carriages, and the hill itself covered with gay figures, who were dancing as well as the tremendous crowd would permit. This was really tolerably republican. The women generally were dressed as the better classes of Mexicans used to be, years ago, and not so many years neither, (and as many in the country still are) in blonde dresses, with very short petticoats, open silk stockings and white satin shoes ; and such a collection of queer bonnets has probably never been seen since the days when "les Anglaises pour rire" first set foot on Gallic shores. Some were like small steeples, others resembled helmets, some were like sugar-loaves, and most seemed to have been sat on for convenience' sake, all the way out. Amidst these there was a good sprinkling of pretty Herbaults, and Paris dresses, but they belonged to the more fashion-

able classes. The scene was amusing from its variety, but we did not remain long, as it threatened rain. As we looked back, the crowd on the hill presented the appearance of a bed of butterflies dancing with black ants.

We returned to the ——'s to dinner, which was very handsome, and entirely French. There were about twenty-eight persons at table, some of whom looked as if they had rather lost than otherwise. After dinner — music, and conversation on the events and probabilities of the day, till it was time to dress for the ball at the plaza. We, however, preferred going to a box, which saves the trouble of dressing, besides being “*de mucho tono*,” very fashionable ; but when we arrived, not a box was to be had, the crowd was so great, and there were so many people of *tono*, besides ourselves, who had preferred doing the same thing ; so we were obliged to content ourselves with retreating to a third row of benches on the floor, after persuading at least a dozen of very good-natured women to turn out, in order to let us in. We were afterwards joined by the —— Minister and his wife. The ball looked very gay, and was prodigiously crowded, and exceedingly amusing.

There were people of all classes ; *modistes* and carpenters, shop-boys, tailors, hatters and hosiers, mingled with all the *haut ton* of Mexico. Every shop-boy considered himself entitled to dance with every lady, and no lady considered herself as having a right to refuse him and then to dance with another person. The Señora de ——, a most high-bred and dignified person, danced with a stable-boy in a jacket

and without gloves, and he appeared particularly gratified at the extraordinary opportunity thus afforded him of holding her white gloves in his brown paws. These fellows naturally select the first ladies as their partners, and strange as it may seem, there is nothing in their behavior that the most fastidious can complain of. They are perfectly polite, quiet and well conducted ; and what is more remarkable, go through a quadrille as well as their neighbors. The ball was quietness itself, until near the end, when the wind-instruments were suddenly seized with a fit of economy, the time they were paid for having probably expired, and stopped short in the midst of a waltz ; upon which the gentleman waltzers shouted "*Viento ! Viento !*" at the full extent of their voices, clapping their hands, refusing to dance, and entirely drowning the sound of some little jingling guitars which were patiently twanging on ; until the hired sons of Æolus had to resume their labors.

There were some pretty faces among the secondary class of small shopkeepers, but their beauty is not striking, and takes a long time to discover ; especially *fagotées* as they are in their overloaded dresses. Amongst the handsomest of the higher classes, were the Señora C——s, and a daughter of the Marquis of G——e.

On the third night of the fête, C——n and I having left the ball-room about ten o'clock, walked out in the direction of the copper-tables which filled the middle of the square, and were covered with awnings. It is a sight, that once seen, can never be forgotten. Nothing but the pencil of Hogarth or the pen of Boz

could do justice to the various groups there assembled. It was a gambling fête-champetre, conducted on the most liberal scale.

On each table were great mountains of copper, with an occasional sprinkling of silver. There was a profusion of evergreens, small tin lamps dripping with oil, and sloping tallow candles shedding grease upon the board. Little ragged boys, acting as waiters, were busily engaged in handing round pulque and chia in cracked tumblers. There was moreover an agreeable tinkling produced from several guitars, and even the bankers condescended to amuse their guests with soothing strains. The general dress of the company consisted of a single blanket, gracefully disposed in folds about the person, so as to show various glimpses of a bronze skin. To this some added a pair of Mexican pantaloons, and some a shirt of a doubtful color. There were many with large hats, most of which had crowns or parts of crowns, but all affording free entrance to the fresh air. Generally speaking, however, the head was uncovered, or covered only with its native thatching of long, bushy, tangled black hair.

This might be out of compliment to the ladies, of whom there were several, and who ought in politeness to have been mentioned first. Nothing could be simpler than their costume, consisting of a very dirty and extremely torn chemise, with short sleeves, a shorter petticoat, and a pair of shoes, generally of dirty satin ; also a rebozo, and the long hair hanging down as Eve's golden locks may have done in Paradise. "They call this place a Paradise," a Spanish

soldier wrote to his father — “and so I think it is, it is so full of *Adams*.”

There was neither fighting, nor swearing, nor high words. I doubt whether there be as much decorum at Crockford's ; indeed, they were scrupulously polite to each other. At one table, the banker was an enormously fat gentleman, one half of whose head was bound up with a dirty white handkerchief, over which a torn piece of hat was stuck, very much to one side. He had a most roguish eye, and a smile of inviting benignity on his dirty countenance. In one hand he held and tingled a guitar, while he most ingeniously swept in the copper with the other. By his side sat two wretched looking women, with long matted hair, their elbows on the table, and their great eyes fixed upon the game with an expression of the most intense anxiety. At another, the *banker* was a pretty little Indian woman, rather clean, comparatively speaking, and who appeared to be doing business smartly. A man stood near her, leaning against one of the poles that supported the awning, who attracted all our attention. He was enveloped in a torn blanket, his head uncovered, and his feet bare ; and was glaring upon the table with his great, dark, haggard looking eyes, his brown face livid, and his expression bordering on despair. It needed no one to tell us that on the table was his last stake. What will such a man do but go upon the road ?

I have heard it mentioned as a strong circumstance in favor of the Mexican character, that there is neither noise nor disturbance in these reunions ; none of that uproar and violence that there would be in

an English mob, for example. The fact is certain, but the inference is doubtful. These people are degraded, and accustomed to endure. They are gentle and cunning, and their passions are not easily roused, at least to open display ; but once awakened, it is neither to uproar that these passions will be excited, nor by fair fight that they will be assuaged. In England, a boxing-match decides a dispute amongst the lower orders ; in Mexico, a knife ; and a broken head is easier mended than a cut throat. Despair must find vent in some way ; and secret murder, or midnight robbery are the fatal consequences of this very calmness of countenance, which is but a mask of nature's own giving to her Indian offspring.

Another reason for this tranquillity, is the *habit* of gambling, in which they have indulged from childhood, and which has taught them that neither high words nor violence will restore a single dollar once fairly lost ; and in point of fairness, everything is carried on with the strictest honor, as among gamblers of high degree.

While "high life below stairs," is thus enacting, and these people are courting fortune in the fresh air, the gentlemanly gamblers are seated before the green cloth-covered tables, with the gravity befitting so many cabinet councils ; but without their mystery, for doors and windows are thrown open, and both ladies and gentlemen may pass in and out, and look on at the game, if they please. The heaps of ounces look temptingly ; and make it appear a true El Dorado. Nor is there any lack of creature-comforts to refresh the flagging spirits. There are supper-spread tables,

covered with savory meats to appease their hunger, and with generous wines to gladden their hearts; and the gentlemen who surrounded that board, seemed to be playing, instead of Monte, an excellent knife and fork.

You must not suppose that those who hold gambling-tables are the less considered on that account; on the contrary, as the banks generally win, they are amongst the richest and consequently the most respected men in Mexico. These bankers are frequently Spaniards, who have found gambling the readiest stepping-stone to fortune. Señor —— explained to me one plan of those who hold the banks, a sort of *hedging*, in which it is next to impossible that they can lose. For example, one of these gentlemen proposes to his friends to take a share in a *vaca*, each contributing a few ounces. Having collected several hundred ounces, they go to play at *his bank*. If they win, he receives his share of course; and if they lose, his bank wins the whole. It is proceeding upon the principle of “Heads I win, tails you lose.”

At the tables, few words are spoken. The heaps of gold change masters, but the masters do not change countenance. I saw but one person who looked a little out of humor, and he was a foreigner. The rich man adds to his store, and the poor man becomes a beggar. He is ruined, but “makes no sign.”

The ladies who have collected ounces and made purses, send their friends and admirers to the tables to try their luck for them; and in some of the inferior houses, the Señoras of a lower class occasionally try

their fortune for themselves. I saw one of these, who had probably lost, by no means "taking it coolly." She looked like an overcharged thunder-cloud ; but whether she broke forth in anger or in tears, thunder or rain, we did not stay to see.

In short, it is an all-pervading mania, and as man is "a bundle of habits," the most moral persons in this country (always excepting one or two ladies who express their opinions strongly against it) see nothing in it to condemn, and are surprised at the effect it produces on a stranger ; and, indeed, after a few years' residence here, a foreigner almost becomes reconciled to these abuses, by the veil of decorum with which they are covered.

We returned to San Antonio in the brightest possible moonlight, and in perfect safety, it being on the high road to Mexico, and therefore guarded by soldiers. We heard the next morning, that a nephew of General B——s, who had ventured upon going by a cross-road to his house, as *Mizcuaque*, has been attacked and robbed of his winnings, besides being severely wounded. This being the natural consequence, the *morale* to the story can excite no surprise. The robbers, who in hopes of plunder, flock down at the time of the fête, like sopilotes seeking carrion, hide themselves among the barren rocks of the *Pedregal*, and render all cross-roads insecure, except with a very strong escort.

An anecdote was related to us this morning, by a member of the cabinet, a striking one amongst the innumerable instances of Fortune's caprices. A very rich Spaniard, proprietor of several haciendas, at-

tended the fête at San Agustin, and having won three thousand ounces, ordered the money to be carried in sacks to his carriage, and prepared to return to Mexico along with his wife. His carriage was just setting off, when a friend of his came out of an adjoining house, and requested him to stay to breakfast, to which he agreed. After breakfast, there being a monte table in the house, at which some of his acquaintances were playing, he put down two ounces, and lost. He continued playing and losing, until he had lost his three thousand ounces, which were sent for and transferred to the winners. He still continued playing with a terrible infatuation, till he had lost his whole fortune. He went on blindly, staking one hacienda after another, and property of all sorts, until the sun, which had risen upon him a rich and prosperous man, set, leaving him a beggar! It is said that he bore this extraordinary and sudden reverse with the utmost equanimity. He left a son, whom we have seen at San Agustin, where he earns his livelihood as *croupier* at the gambling tables.

29th. — No particular occurrence has taken place since the fête; a visit from the new Secretary of Legation and the Attaché, a diplomatic dinner at the — Minister's, much going and coming and writing on the subject of a house in Mexico, a correspondence concerning the sale of our furniture, mules, &c., &c., a good deal of interest excited by a bet between two English gentlemen, as to whether it were possible for one of them to ride from Mexico to San Angel in twenty minutes, which feat he performed, starting from the gate called "*El Niño Perdido*,"

and reaching the old church of San Angel within the given time ; these I think are the most remarkable circumstances that have taken place. We are now in treaty for the furnished apartments of the director of the *Casa de Moneda*, (the mint) a great building next the palace, from which upwards of one thousand three hundred millions of coined gold and silver have issued since the beginning of the sixteenth century. The house is a palace in extent and solidity ; and the residence of the director is very spacious and handsome, besides having the great advantage of being furnished. We expect to return to Mexico in a few days.

CASA DE MONEDA, 6th July.

Here we are, reëstablished in Mexico, for a short time at least, and not without difficulty has it been accomplished. We left the country with some regret, as this is the pleasantest time of the year for being there, and everything was looking green and beautiful. We came in, ourselves, in a loaded carriage, and in advance, fourteen asses loaded with boxes, four Indians with ditto, and two enormous loaded carts, one drawn by four, and another by eight mules. We were a regular *caravan*, as our friend the Alcalde called us. Imagine the days of packing and unpacking consequent thereupon ! . . .

On the 1st of July, the victory gained by the government over the federalist party, was celebrated with great eclat. The President was presented with a diamond cross, valued at six thousand dollars, and General Valencia with a splendid jewel-hilted sword

of great value. "Yesterday morning," says the newspaper of the day, "a general pealing of the bells and the usual salutes, announced to the capital that it was a day of rewards and of universal joy. At twelve o'clock, his Excellency the President of the Republic, went to the palace, to fulfil the formality of closing the sessions, and to receive from the hands of the President of the Chamber of Deputies, the diploma and cross of honor mentioned in the decrees of the second of March and second of May of this year. An immense multitude occupied the galleries ; and the President, Don J. Maria Bravo, addressed his Excellency General Bustamante, in the following speech :

" Citizen General, and illustrious President — Nations never forget the distinguished services that are done to them, nor fail to reward those heroic actions performed for the common good. Sooner or later they show themselves grateful, and reward as they ought their good and valiant servants. The Mexican nation has not forgotten yours, and its Congress has ever borne in mind those which you performed for it at that happy period when the unfortunate hero of Iguala, causing the voice of freedom to resound to the remotest lands of the Mexican territory, gave a terrible lesson to those who wish to subdue weak nations, with no other title than that of strength. You were one of the first and most valiant chiefs, who placed by his side, assisted in this important and happy work ; you it was who shewed to the tyrant in the fields of Juchi, Azcapozalco and others, that the sword of the Mexicans once unsheathed for liberty

and justice, fights without softening or breaking ; and knows how to triumph over its enemies, even when superior forces oppose it ; you it was, in short, who with intrepid valor coöperated in reëstablishing a liberty, which, torn from the ancient children of the soil, was converted by their oppressors into a hard and shameful tyranny. History has already consecrated her pages to you ; she will record to posterity your heroic deeds, and Congress has already busied itself in rewarding such interesting services.

“ If some Mexicans, erring in their opinions, by a fatality in this country, have disowned them, making an attempt against your personal liberty, notwithstanding the dignity of the first magistrate ; trampling upon laws and overturning order ; they have at length been obliged to respect you ; and your valor, firmness and decision have made them preserve the consideration due to an ancient chief of our independence, and to a first magistrate who has known how to set an example of subordination to the laws, and to give with dignity lessons of valor and of honorable conduct.

“ A diploma and a cross are the rewards which the sovereign Congress has decreed for these services and merits. Do not regard in the one the effaceable characters in which it is written, nor be dazzled by the brilliancy of the other. See in both a proof of your country’s gratitude, and engraving it in your soul, continue to give testimonies to your country that she is the first object of your care ; that your watchings, fatigues and labors are dedicated only to procure for her those benefits which may bring about

the durable and solid peace that she so much desires, and for which you would, if necessary, sacrifice yourself on her altars.

“Do not forget that to-day she shews herself grateful, and that this is the day decreed by the august national representative body, to put you in possession of the title and insignia which manifest her gratitude. I, in the name of the Congress, congratulate you on this fortunate event, and having the honor to fulfil the desire of the sovereign power, place in your hands this diploma of deserving reward from your country, and give you possession of this cross.”

His Excellency having received the diploma and cross above-mentioned, with his native modesty replied thus :

“In hearing, by the organ of the august national representation, the great encomiums with which it favors me, putting me at the same time in possession of these precious gifts, my soul overflows with ineffable pleasure, and is overwhelmed with the deepest gratitude. My satisfaction and my glory are immense. What could I have done, that thus the generous hand of the representatives of the Mexican people should load me with honors? Have my trifling services been able to fix the attention of the country, on whose altars have been sacrificed so many and such illustrious heroes of liberty? My glory would have been yet greater, had I, like them, descended to the sepulchre, when the sun of victory brightened the existence of this sovereign and independent nation, to the glory of the universe.

“The honors which I receive to-day are certainly great ; but I should have preferred them before the never-sufficiently mourned catastrophe of the immortal Yturbide. Let us throw a thick veil over so irreparable a loss. It is true, that surviving such great misfortunes, I have been enabled to consecrate my existence and my vigilance to the peace, order and felicity of this beloved country. But how difficult is the conduct of those who govern in the midst of the conflict of civil dissensions ! In these, my conscience has chosen, and my resolution has never vacillated between ignominy and honor. Do I on this account deserve the national gratitude and munificence, manifested by such distinguished rewards ? I return for them to the representatives of the nation my frankest gratitude ; fixing my mind only on the grandeur and benevolence of the sovereign power which rewards me in the sacred name of the country. I shall preserve till death these precious objects which render my name illustrious as a soldier, and as a supreme magistrate. They will stimulate me more and more every day to all kinds of sacrifices, even to the giving up my life should it be necessary ; that I may not be unworthy of the favorable conception and of the recompense with which the worthy representatives of so magnanimous a nation have to-day honored me. Receive, gentlemen, this frank manifestation of my sentiments, and of my fervent vows for the felicity of the republic, with the most sincere protestations of my eternal gratitude.”

“The liveliest emotions of satisfaction” (I still quote from the *Diario*) “followed this expressive dis-

course. Joy was painted on every countenance. The frank satisfaction which every one felt, gave to this act a solemnity which words are incapable of describing. His Excellency, accompanied by the corporations and by a brilliant and numerous concourse, then passed to the hall of the court-martial, to put in possession of His Excellency General D. Gabriel Valencia, the sword of honor which the august national representation had granted him, for his loyal and valiant conduct in the affair of July of 1840. His Excellency the President began this ceremony by expressing his sentiments to His Excellency the *Geefe de la plana mayor* (head of the staff) in these terms :

“Citizen General: In this day, the most flattering of my life, in which the august representatives of the nation have just put me in possession of the rewards granted to my small services, I fulfil the law which imposes upon me the grateful task of presenting you with the sword of honor, with which their munificence has also chosen to remunerate your’s.

“Receive it as the distinguished reward of your loyalty, and of the valor with which you fought at that memorable period, from the 15th to the 26th of July, defending with bravery the constitution and supreme powers of the Republic. I congratulate myself with you, not doubting that you will always employ the edge of this steel in defence of the honor, of the sacred rights, and of the laws of this country. Yes, General of this beloved country, to whom we owe all kinds of sacrifices; yes, of this beloved mother who now more than ever reclaims the frater-

nal union of all her children, to conquer the internal and external enemies who oppose her felicity and aggrandizement, let us pledge ourselves to correspond thankfully to the generosity with which the representatives of the nation have rewarded us, and let us march united in the same path which honor and duty traced out for us, in that day of honorable memory for the defenders of the laws. Eternal praise to the brave soldiers and citizens who coöperated with us in the establishment of order !”

To which General Valencia replied : “ That a correspondent reward should follow a heroic action, nothing more natural ; but to remunerate a service which does not go beyond the sphere of ordinary things, such as mine in the affair of the 15th to the 26th of July of 1840, by such a noble distinction as the sword of honor with which your Excellency has deigned to gird me, in the name of the National Congress, of this the magnanimity of the sovereignty is alone capable ; and so it is that I remain annihilated by a present worthy of the ages of the Roman Senate and Republic. What did I do, your Excellency, in those days, that any one of my countrymen would not have done better ? Nothing, sir ; so that in receiving this sword of honor, my confusion equals my doubt as to my place in the gratitude of the Congress which has given it to me, of your Excellency who has deigned to present it to me, and of my worthy countrymen who bestowed it that I might wear it.

“ In this condition, your Excellency, of content and satisfaction, I can say no more, but that I hope your Excellency will manifest to Congress my eternal

gratitude ; that your Excellency will receive my noble acknowledgments, and my companions the assurance that every time I put it on I shall remember the names of all and each of them who accompanied me on the 15th of July of 1840, together with the pleasure that to them I owe so great a mark of respect."

Amongst the congratulations given to the President, the following "congratulation from His Excellency General Valencia to His Excellency the President, on his receiving the decoration of the cross of honor from Congress," is very remarkable. "God said, the first day of the creation of the world, when it was in a state of chaos, '*Let there be light, and there was light.*' And God saw his work and pronounced it good! With how much more reason ought the garrison of Mexico to do so every day in which, by any action, the 15th of July of 1840 is celebrated ; in which, by their strength and heroic valor, that passage of Genesis was politically repeated in this capital. Society arose in chaos. Its President is taken. Authorities no longer exist, and those who ought to save them are converted into their oppressors. '*God said let there be light, and there was light!*' The honorable troops re-united in the citadel, in the midst of chaos, said, 'let order be reëstablished, let the supreme magistrate be set at liberty, and let things resume their proper march.' Order *was* reëstablished, your Excellency was set free, and the political body followed the regular path, without which no society exists. So it is that those worthy troops who thus said, thus undertook, and

thus accomplished, now also resemble the Creator of the world, (*hoy tambien se asememejan al Criador del mundo*) in his content, when satisfied with his work.

“The cross which has been worthily placed on your Excellency’s breast this day, reflects in such a singular manner upon the hearts of the valiant men of that period, (*reflecta de un modo tan singular sobre los corazones de los valientes de aquella época*) that their souls are expanded in contemplating it, by the honor which results to them from it.

“May your Excellency be happy one and a thousand times, with such a noble and worthy decoration. Let your Excellency receive in it the sincere congratulations of the garrison of Mexico, which figures in each stone of this cross, like the stars in the firmament.”

“This ceremony being concluded, the two rewarded Generals presented themselves on the principal balcony of the palace, in front of which passed the brilliant column of honor ; at its head marched the Commandant General, Don Valentin Canalizo ; and the brilliancy, neatness and elegance which all the corps of the garrison displayed, is above all praise. When the regiment had passed, a sumptuous entertainment was served in one of the halls of the Minister of War, in which elegance, good taste and propriety rivalled one another ; while repeated toasts showed the most sincere joy, united with the most patriotic and fraternal sentiments. Rain having begun to fall at about three in the afternoon, the paséo was on this account not so crowded as might have

been expected ; nevertheless, the military bands were present, and at six in the evening, their Excellencies Generals Bustamante and Valencia having presented themselves there, were received with *vivas* and universal joy.

“ At night the chiefs and officers of the *plana mayor* gave a ball in the college of the Minería ; and the Theatre of New Mexico dedicated its entertainment to His Excellency the President. Nothing disturbed the joy of this day ; one sentiment alone of union and cheerfulness overflowed in the capital, proving to those illustrious Generals the unanimous applause with which Mexicans see their country reward the distinguished services of their children who are so deserving of their love and gratitude.”

Notwithstanding the ineffable joy which, according to the *Diario*, is generally felt on this occasion, there are many who doubt the policy of this celebration, at a time when the troops are unpaid ; when the soldiers, wounded at the last *pronunciamiento*, are refused their pensions ; while the widows and orphans of others are vainly suing for assistance. “ At the best,” say those who cavil on the subject, “ it was a civil war, a war between brothers, a subject of regret and not of glory, of sadness and not of jubilee.” As for General Valencia’s congratulation to the President, in which he compares the “ honorable troops ” to the Supreme Being, the reëstablishment of order in Mexico to the creation of the world from chaos, it is chiefly incomprehensible. Perhaps he is carried away by his joy and gratitude and personal affection for Bustamante — perhaps he has taken a leaf from a translation of *Bombastes Furioso*.

One thing is certain. The whole affair had a brilliant appearance ; and the handsome carriages, fine horses, gaily dressed officers and soldiers, together with the military music and the crowds of people collected, produced an imposing effect.

LETTER THE FORTY-SECOND.

Italian opera — Artists, male and female — Prima Donna — Lucia de Lammermoor — Some disappointment — Second representation — Improvement — Romeo and Giulietta — La Ricci — La Señora Cesari — The mint — False coining — Repetition of Lucia — Proceession by night — A Spanish beauty — Discriminating audience — A little *too simple* — Gold embroidery — Santiago — Pilgrims — Old Indian custom — Soirée — Mexico by moonlight — Mysterious figure — Archbishop — Viceroy.

13th July.

WE little expected to be still here at the opening of the new Italian Opera, and had consequently given up our box. Señor Roca, who went to Italy to bring out the *requisites*, has arrived at the end of a wonderfully short period, with the singers, male and female; the new dresses, decorations, &c.; and the first opera, Lucia de Lammermoor, was given last week. The theatre is the former *Teatro de Gallos*, an octagonal circus, which has been fitted up as elegantly as circumstances would permit, and as the transition from the crowing of cocks to the soft notes of *Giulietta* rendered necessary. The “*Prima Donna Assoluta*” is the Signora Anaide Castellan de Giampietro; born in Paris, bred in Milan. The “*Prima Donna Soprano*” is the Signora de Ricci, and the second *Donna* is called Branzanti. The first Tenor is Signor Giampietro, husband of the Prima Donna; and

the second Tenor is the Signor Alberti Bozetti. The first Bass is Signor Tomassi, and the Bouffo Bass Signor Spontini. They have been so much *proné*, and public expectation has been so much excited, that we supposed it probable that the first evening at least would be a failure to a certain extent. Besides, the Mexican audience, if not very experienced, is decidedly musical, and they have already had a pretty good opera here, have heard Madame Albini, la Cesari, Garcia, (the father of Malibran) and the *beaux restes* of Galli; therefore can compare.

The first evening, the Castellan made her appearance as *Lucia*. She is about twenty; slight and fair, with black hair, graceful, and with a very sweet, clear and pure young voice, also very correct. The Tenor rests upon his wife's laurels. He looks well, but little more can be said in his praise. Tomassi has some good notes, and a fine figure. Of the others who sang that evening, there is little to be said. The theatre is extremely well got up; the dresses are new and rich; and the decorations and scenery remarkably good. The public, however, were disappointed. They had prepared for wonders, and were not satisfied with a fair performance. The applauses were few and far between. The Castellan was not called for, and the following day, a certain degree of discontent pervaded the aristocracy of the capital.

At the second representation of the same opera, things mended. The voice of la Castellan was appreciated. Applauses were loud and long, and at the end of the opera, she and the director were called for, and received with enthusiasm. She seems likely to become a favorite.

Last evening, we had Romeo and Giulietta, in which La Ricci and La Cesari made their appearance, the former as Giulietta, the latter as Romeo. The Ricci is a thin young woman, with a long, pale face, black eyes and hair, long neck and arms, and large hands ; extremely pretty, it is said, off the stage, and very ineffective on it ; but both on and off with a very distinguished air. Her voice is extensive, but wanting cultivation, and decidedly *pea-hennish* ; besides that, she is apt to go out of tune. Her style of dress was excessively unbecoming to her style of beauty. She wore a tight, white gown, a tight, blue satin peaked body with long, tight, blue sleeves. The public were indulgent, but it was evident that they were disappointed.

La Cesari, highly married, and who for the last three years, has not appeared upon the stage, came out as *Romeo*, with tunic and mantle, white silk stockings, hat and feathers, &c. She was very much frightened and ill at ease ; and it required all the applause with which the public greeted the entrée of their former favorite, to restore her to self-possession. She looked remarkably well ; tall, handsome, beautifully formed, rather pale, with fine dark eyes, dark hair and *moustaches*. Her acting was greatly superior, as much so as was her beauty, to any of the others. She has more knowledge of the theatre, more science, taste and energy than any of them ; but her voice, a soft contralto, is out of use and feeble. The theatre, besides, is ill-constructed for the voice, and must have a bad effect upon the fulness and tone. On the whole, it seems doubtful

whether the opera will endure long. Were we going to remain here, I should trust that it might be supported, for with all its faults and drawbacks, it is decidedly the best public exhibition in Mexico. The *coup d'œil* was exceedingly pretty, as all the boxes were crowded, and the ladies were in full dress.

July 20th. — As we are living in the mint, the directors have called on us; and this morning they came to invite us to descend into the lower regions, to see the silver coined. We went all over this immense establishment, a fine picture of decayed magnificence, built about one hundred and ten years ago by the Spaniards. Dirty, ill-kept, the machinery rude, the workmen discontented; its fine vaulted roofs, that look like the interior of a cathedral, together with that *grandiose* style which distinguished the buildings of the Spaniards in Mexico, form a strong contrast with the occupants.

We saw the silver bars stretched out, the dollars cut and whitened and stamped; and in one place we saw the machines for *coining false money*, which have been collected in such numbers that there is hardly room for them! We saw the place where the silver and gold is tested; and the room with the medals, amongst which are some ancient Roman, Persian and English, but especially Spanish, and many of the time of Charles the Third; when we were looking at which, an old gentleman exclaimed, “would to Heaven those days would return!” without doubt the general feeling. This old man had been forty-four years in the Casa de Moneda, and had lived under several viceroys. He could remem-

ber, when a boy, being sent with a commission to the Viceroy Revillagigedo, and being very much frightened, but soon re-assured by the kind reception of the Representative of Majesty. He spoke of the flourishing condition of the mint in those days, which coined twenty-seven millions annually, and was a royal house. He said that the viceroys used to praise them and to thank them for their exertions; that the house was then kept in the most perfect order, the principal officers wearing a uniform, &c.

Hereupon, another old gentleman took up the theme, and improved upon it; and told us, that, on one occasion, they had one million three hundred thousand dollars' worth of gold in the house; and described the visit of the Vice-Queen Yturri-guray, who came to see it, and sat down and looked round her in amazement at the quantity of gold she saw accumulated. This old gentleman had been thirty years in the mint, and seemed as though he had never been anywhere else; as if he were part and parcel in it, and had been coined, and beat out, and clipped there.

Hearing him, another, a fat man, rather unclipt-looking than otherwise, began to bewail the state of the times, till it was a chorus universal, where all sang in one key. One had a very large, underhanging lip, with a kind of tragi-comic countenance, and was constantly making lugubrious puns. Another, who seemed bred to the mint, (though by his account the mint was not *bread* to him) was insatiably curious, as a man born in a mint might be. We passed about three hours in a mixture of admiration of the

past and sorrow for the present ; and were reconducted to our domicile by the poor employés, who seemed to think that a Spanish Minister was the next best to a Spanish Viceroy, of anything they had seen for some time.

“ The Past is nothing ; and, at last,
The Future will but be the Past,”

says Lord Byron. Here the Past is everything ; and the Future ? — Answer it who can.

We were assured, while wondering at the number of machines for false coining which had been collected, that there are twice that number now in full force in Mexico ; but that they belong to such distinguished personages, the government is afraid to interfere with them. Besides this, there is now no sufficient punishment for this crime, a capital offence in the days of the Spanish government. A lady here is said to have exclaimed, with much simplicity, on hearing her husband accused of false coining, “ I really wonder why they make so much noise about it. It seems to me that my husband’s copper is as good as any other ! ”

24th. — We went last evening to the opera, which was a repetition of Lucia, as it appears they cannot venture, in the face of public disapprobation, to repeat Romeo and Giulietta at present. As we were passing through the square, the carriage suddenly drew up ; the coachman and footman uncovered their heads ; and an immense procession came passing along to the cathedral, with lights and military music. There were officers in full uniform, with their

heads uncovered, a long file of monks and priests, and a carriage carrying the Host, surrounded by hundreds of people on foot, all bearing lighted torches. A band of military music accompanied the procession; all which astonished us, as it was no fête day. When, at length, being able to pass along, we arrived at the opera, we were informed that they were carrying the *viaticum* to a rich acquaintance of ours, a General, who has been indisposed for some time, and whose illness has now exhibited fatal symptoms. . . .

For him, then, these great cathedral bells are tolling heavily; for him, the torches and the pompous procession — the sandalled monks, and the officers in military array; while two bands of music are playing, one at his door and another in front of the cathedral; and in the midst of these sounds of monkish hymn and military music, the soul is preparing to wing its flight, alone and unattended. . . .

But the sweet notes of the Lucia drown all other from our ears, if not from our thoughts. In a house, not many hundred yards off, they administer the Host to a dying man; while here, La Castellan, with her pretty French graces and Italian singing, is drawing tears from our eyes for fictitious sorrows.

The theatre was pretty well filled; though there were some empty boxes, sight more hideous in the eyes of actors than toothless mouths. We sat with Madame la Baronne de —, and nearly opposite was Madame —, related to the "*Principe de la Paz*," a handsome woman, with a fine Bohemian cast of face, dark in complexion, with glittering teeth,

brilliant eyes, and fine dark hair. La Castellan sang very well, with much clearness, precision and facility. She is certainly graceful and pretty, but, except in her method, more French than Italian. Her style suits Lucia ; but I doubt her having *l'air noble* sufficient for a Norma or a Semiramis. The Bass improves upon acquaintance, but the handsome Tenor is nought. The audience seemed to me both indulgent and discriminating. They applauded the pretty prima donna *con furor* ; they praised the Bass when he deserved it, the Tenor when it was possible ; but where he sang false, nothing could extort from them a solitary *viva*. This discrimination makes their applause worth having, and proceeds less from experience or cultivation, than from a *musical instinct*.

In a visit we made this morning, we were shown a piece of embroidery, which from its splendor and good taste, is worthy of observation, though by no means uncommon here. We went to call on the wife of a judge, who showed us all through their beautiful house, which looks out on the Alameda. In one of the rooms, their daughter was engaged on a piece of embroidery for the altar of the chapel. The ground was the very richest and thickest white satin ; the design was a garland of vine-leaves, with bunches of grapes. The vine-leaves were beautifully embroidered in fine gold, and the grapes were composed of amethysts. I can conceive nothing richer and more tasteful than the general effect. The gold embroidery done in Mexico is generally very beautiful, and there are many ladies who embroider in it in great perfection. There is an amazing quantity of

it used in the churches, and in military uniforms. I have also seen beautiful gold embroidered ball-dresses, but they are nearly out of fashion. . . . We hear that General —, though still ill, is likely to recover.

25th. — This being the day of Santiago, the patron saint of Spain, C——n was invited by the padres of San Francisco to attend mass in the church there. We were shown to the tribuna (gallery) of the Countess de Santiago, where they gave us chairs, and put down a piece of carpet. C——n and the rest of the legation were in the body of the church, in velvet chairs, with lighted tapers in their hands. The saint was carried in procession, going out by the principal door, making the tour of the streets, and returning by a side door. The music was pretty good, especially one soprano voice. Twelve little boys were placed on crimson velvet benches, on either side of the altar, representing pilgrims of Galicia, (of which Santiago is the capital) handsome little fellows, belonging to respectable families, dressed in robes of dark green or crimson, or violet colored velvet, with falling lace collars, and the neck ornamented with gold and silver shells; a large pilgrim's hat fastened on behind, and hanging down, and in their hands staffs with gold bells. They were beautiful children, and all behaved with becoming gravity and decorum during the ceremony, walking with much dignity in the procession.

After the *funcion*, we went out to Santiago, an old church near Mexico, where the Indians annually come in procession on this day, and sell their

fruit, flowers, pulque, &c. All the waste ground near the church was covered with green booths, and there was a great crowd of carriages and horsemen, and people on foot. The troops were drawn out, escorting the procession to the church. But though the scene was curious, as the remnant of an old established ceremony, and the Indians, with their booths and flowers, and great show of fruit, were all very picturesque, the sun was so intense, that after walking about a little while, and buying tunas and nuts and peaches, we returned home, together with the Güera Rodriguez, who was in the carriage with us, and giving us a lively description of what this fête used to be in former days. Had a visit the same morning from the Señora M——, whom I think even handsomer by daylight, than she appeared to be at the opera; not always the case with dark beauties.

26th. — Another representation of Vaccaj's Romeo and Giulietta, with the second appearance of La Ricci. Music and Ricci seem considered a failure. The Señori Césari made the handsomest of Romeos, as usual, but was ill, and out of spirits. The Opera as a whole was coldly received; the boxes and pit were nearly empty, and La Ricci seems unlikely to gain any favor with the public, though it must be confessed that she looked better, was more becomingly dressed, and both sang and acted better than the preceding night. Yesterday we went to a soirée at the — Minister's. Madame Castellan and her Tenor were there, and had come from a dinner given by a rich curate to the whole *corps operatique*,

from the Prima Donna down to the *Joueur du fagote*, and even to the tailor who makes the opera dresses, and his wife. This rich padre, it is said, spends a great part of his fortune in entertaining actors and singers. La Castellan, (permission to that effect having been obtained from the manager, for it is against their agreement to perform in private houses,) sang several airs to the piano, with much expression, especially from *Robert le Diable* ; and *Nina Pazzo per Amore* ; but I prefer her voice in the theatre. She is not at all beautiful, but has a charming face, with a very musical expression.

We returned home by moonlight, the most flattering medium through which Mexico can be viewed ; with its broad and silent streets, and splendid old buildings, whose decay and abandonment are softened by the silvery light ; its ancient churches, from which the notes of the organ occasionally come pealing forth, mingled with faint blasts of music borne on the night wind from some distant procession ; or with the soft music of a hymn from some neighboring convent. The white-robed monk — the veiled female — even the ragged beggar, adds to the picture ; by daylight his rags are too visible. Frequently, as the carriages roll along to the Opera, or as, at a late hour, they return from it, they are suddenly stopped by the appearance of the mysterious coach, with its piebald mules, and the *Eye* surrounded by rays of light on its panels ; a melancholy apparition, for it has come from the house of mourning, probably from the bed of death. Then, by the moonlight, the kneeling figures on the pavement seem as if carved

in stone. The city of Mexico by moonlight — the environs of Mexico at daybreak — these are the hours for viewing both to advantage, and for making us feel how

“ All but the spirit of man is divine.”

In front of our house, I should say of *the Mint*, is the Archbishop's Palace, and in front of this palace an object which has greatly excited our curiosity. It is an old man, who, whether as a penance, or from some motive which we do not know, kneels, wrapt in his sarape, beside the wall of the *Arzobispado* from sunset till midnight, or later — for we have frequently gone out at nine in the evening, and left him kneeling there ; and on our return at one in the morning have found him in the same position. He asks no alms, but kneels there silent and motionless, hour after hour, as if in the performance of some vow.

We made a call this evening on the Archbishop in his own palace, an enormously large building ; a sort of street, like this Casa de Moneda. He received us very cordially, and looked very comfortable without his robes of state, in a fine cloth dressing-gown, lined with violet-colored silk.

August 1st. — We had a visit last evening from one of the directors of the mint, a curious and most original genius, a Mexican, who has served nearly thirty years in that and in other capacities, and who, after speaking of the different viceroys he had seen, proceeded to give us various anecdotes of the Viceroy Revillagigedo, the most honored for his justice,

renowned for his energy, and feared for his severity, of the whole dynasty. Our friend was moved to enthusiasm by the sight of an old-fashioned but very handsome musical clock, which stands on a table in the drawing-room, and which he says was brought over by this Viceroy, and was no doubt considered a miracle of art in those days.

Some of the anecdotes he told us are already generally known here, but his manner of telling them was very interesting, and he added various particulars which we had not heard before. Besides, the stories themselves seem to me so curious and characteristic, that however much they lose by being tamely written instead of *dramatized* as they are by him, I am tempted to give you one or two specimens. But my letter is getting beyond all ordinary limits, and your curiosity will no doubt keep cool till the arrival of another packet.

LETTER THE FORTY-THIRD.

Revillagigedo — The false merchant and the lady — The Viceroy, the unjust Spaniard, the Indian, and the golden ounces — Horrible murder — Details — Oath — Country family — The spot of blood — The mother unknowingly denounces her son — Arrest of *the three* — Confession — Execution — The Viceroy fulfils his pledge — Paving of the streets — Severity to the monks — Solitary damsel — Box on the ear — Pension — Morning concert — New Minister — “Street of the sad Indian” — Traditions — A farewell audience — Inscription on a tomb.

August 3d.

A LADY of fortune, owing to some combination of circumstances, found herself in difficulties, and in immediate want of a small sum of money. Don —— being her *compadre*, and a respectable merchant, she went to him to state her necessities, and offered him a case of valuable jewels as security for repayment, provided he would advance her eight hundred dollars. He agreed, and the bargain was concluded without any written document, the lady depositing her jewels and receiving the sum. At the end of a few months, her temporary difficulties being ended, she went to her *compadre's* house to repay the money, and receive back her jewels. The man readily received the money, but declared to his astonished *comadre*, that as to the jewels, he had never heard of them, and that no such transaction had taken place. The Señora, indignant

at the merchant's treachery, instantly repaired to the palace of the Vice-King, hoping for justice from this Western Solomon, though unable to conceive how it could be obtained. She was instantly received by Revillagigedo, who listened attentively to her account of the circumstances. "Had you no witnesses?" said the Count. "None," replied she. "Did no servant pass in or out during the transaction?" "No one." The Viceroy reflected a moment. "Does your compadre smoke?" "No sir," said the lady, astonished at this irrelevant question, and perhaps the more so, as the Count's aversion to smoking was so well known, that none of his smoking subjects ventured to approach him without having taken every precaution to deaden any odor of the fragrant weed which might lurk about their clothes or person. "Does he take snuff?" said the Viceroy. "Yes, your Excellency," said his visiter, who probably feared that for once His Excellency's wits were wool-gathering. "That is sufficient," said the Viceroy; "retire into the adjoining chamber and *keep quiet* — your jewels shall be restored." His Excellency then despatched a messenger for the merchant, who immediately presented himself.

"I have sent for you," said the Viceroy, "that we may talk over some matters in which your mercantile knowledge may be of use to the state." The merchant was overwhelmed with gratitude and joy; while the Viceroy entered into conversation with him upon various affairs connected with his profession. Suddenly the Viceroy put his hand first in one pocket, then in the other, with the air of a man who

has mislaid something. "Ah!" said he, "My snuff-box. Excuse me for a moment while I go to fetch it from the next room." "Sir!" said the merchant, "permit me to have the honor of offering my box to your Excellency." His Excellency received it as if mechanically, holding it in his hand and talking, till pretexting some business, he went out, and calling an officer, desired him to take that snuff-box to the merchant's house, asking his wife as from him, by that token, to deliver to the bearer a case of jewels which he had there. The Viceroy returned to the apartment where he had left his flattered guest, and remained in conversation with him until the officer returned, and requesting private speech of the Viceroy, delivered to him a jewel-case which he had received from the merchant's wife.

Revillagigedo then returned to his fair complainant, and under pretence of showing her some rooms in the palace, led her into one, where amongst many objects of value, the jewel-case stood open. No sooner had she cast her eyes upon it than she started forward in joy and amazement. The Viceroy requested her to wait there a little longer, and returned to his other guest. "Now," said he, "before going further, I wish to hear the truth concerning another affair in which you are interested. Are you acquainted with the Señora de ——?" "Intimately, sir — she is my *comadre*." "Did you lend her eight hundred dollars at such a date?" "I did." "Did she give you a case of jewels in pledge?" "Never," said the merchant, vehemently. "The money was lent without any security; merely as an act of friendship,

and she has invented a story concerning some jewels, which has not the slightest foundation." In vain the Viceroy begged him to reflect, and not, by adding falsehood to treachery, force him to take measures of severity. The merchant with oaths persisted in his denial. The Viceroy left the room suddenly, and returned with the jewel-case in his hand ; at which unexpected apparition the astonished merchant changed color and entirely lost his presence of mind. The Viceroy ordered him from his presence, with a severe rebuke for his falsehood and treachery, and an order never again to enter the palace. At the same time he commanded him to send him the next morning, eight hundred dollars with five hundred more ; which he did, and which were, by the Viceroy's order, distributed amongst the hospitals. His Excellency is said to have added a severe reprimand to the lady, for having made a bargain without writing.

Another story which I recollect, is as follows : A poor Indian appeared before the Viceroy, and stated that he had found in the street a bag full of golden ounces, which had been advertised with the promise of a handsome reward to the person who should restore them to the owner ; that upon carrying them to this Don ———, he had received the bag, counted the ounces, extracted two, which he had seen him slip into his pocket ; and had then reproached the poor man with having stolen part of the money, had called him a thief and a rascal, and instead of rewarding, had driven him from the house. With the Viceroy there was no delay. Immediate action was his plan. Detaining the Indian, he despatched an officer

to desire the attendance of Don —— —— with his bag of ounces. He came, and the Viceroy desired him to relate the circumstances, his practised eye reading his falsehood at a glance. “May it please your Excellency, I lost a bag containing gold. The Indian now in your Excellency’s presence, brought it to me in hopes of a reward, having first stolen part of the contents. I drove him from the house as a thief, who, instead of recompense, deserves punishment.”

“Stay,” said the Viceroy, “there is some mistake here. How many ounces were there in the bag you lost?” “Twenty-eight.” “And how many are here?” “But twenty-six.” “Count them down. I see it is as you say. The case is clear, and we have all been mistaken. Had this Indian been a thief, he would never have brought back the bag, and stolen merely two ounces. He would have kept the whole. It is evident that this is not your bag, but another which this poor man has found. Sir, our interview is at an end. Continue to search for your bag of gold; and as for you, friend, since we cannot find the true owner, sweep up these twenty-six pieces and carry them away. They are yours.” So saying, His Excellency bowed out the discomfited cheat and the overjoyed rustic. Mr. —— says that this story, he thinks, is taken from something similar in an oriental tale. However, it *may* have occurred twice.

A horrible murder took place in 1789, during the Viceroyaltyship of Revillagigedo, which is remarkable in two particulars; the trifling circumstances which led to its discovery, and the energy displayed

by the Viceroy, contrasting strongly with the tardy execution of justice in our days. There lived in Mexico at that period, in the street of *Cordovanes*, No. 15, a rich merchant of the name of Don Joaquin Dongo. A clerk named José Joaquin Blanco, who had formerly been in his office, having fallen into vicious courses, and joined in companionship with two other young men, Felipe Aldama and Baltazar Quintero, gamblers and cock-fighters (with reverence be it spoken!) like himself, formed, in concert with them, a plan for robbing his former master.

They accordingly repaired to the house one evening, when they knew that Dongo was from home, and imitating the signal which Blanco knew the coachman was in the habit of making to the porter when the carriage returned at night, the doors were immediately thrown open, and the robbers entered. The porter was their first victim. He was thrown down and stabbed. A postman, who was waiting with letters for the return of the master of the house, was the next, and then the cook, and so on, until eleven lay weltering in their blood. The wretches then proceeded to pick the locks of the different bureaux, guided by Blanco, who, in his former capacity, had made himself *au fait* of all the secrets of the house. They obtained twenty-two thousand dollars in specie, and about seven thousand dollars' worth of plate.

Meanwhile, the unfortunate master of the house returned home, and at the accustomed signal the doors were opened by the robbers, and on the entrance of the carriage, instantly relocked. Seeing

the porter bathed in blood, and dead bodies lying at the foot of the staircase, he comprehended at once his desperate situation, and advancing to Aldama, who stood near the door, he said, "My life is in your hands; but, for God's sake, show some mercy, and do not murder me in cold blood. Say what sums of money you want. Take all that is in the house, and leave me, and I swear to keep your secret." Aldama consented, and Dongo passed on. As he ascended the stairs, stepping over the body of the postman, he encountered Quintero, and to him he made the same appeal, with the same success; when Blanco, springing forward, held his sword to Quintero's breast, and swearing a great oath, exclaimed, "If you do not stab him, I will kill you on the spot." Conceive, for one moment, the situation of the unfortunate Dongo, surrounded by the murdered and the murderers, in his own house, at the dead of night, and without a hope of assistance! The suspense was momentary. Thus adjured, Quintero stabbed him to the heart.

The murderers then collected their spoil, and it being still dark, two of them got into Dongo's carriage, the third acting as coachman, and so drove swiftly out of the gates of the city, till, arriving at a deserted spot, not far from a village, they turned the carriage and mules adrift, and buried their treasure, which they transported afterwards to a house in the Calle de la Aguila, (the street of the eagle) No. 23; and went about their avocations in the morning, as if nothing had occurred. Meanwhile, the public consternation may be conceived, when the morning

dawned upon this bloody tragedy. As for the Viceroy, he swore that the murderers should be discovered, and hanged before his eyes, that day week.

Immediately the most energetic measures were taken, and the gates of the city shut, to prevent all egress. Orders were given through all the different districts of the capital, that every guest, or visiter, or boarder, whether in inn or lodging, or private house, should have their names given up to the police, with an account of their condition, occupation, motives for living in Mexico, &c. Strict cognizance was taken in all the villages near the capital, of every person who had passed through, or entered, or left the village within a certain space of time. All the roads near the capital were scoured by parties of soldiers. Every hidden place was searched by the police ; every suspected house entered. The funeral of the ill-fated Dongo and of the other victims, took place the following day ; and it was afterwards remembered that Aldama was there amongst the foremost, remarking and commenting upon this horrible wholesale butchery, and upon the probabilities of discovering the murderers.

A country family from a neighboring village, hearing of all these doings in Mexico, and with that love of the marvellous which characterizes persons uneducated, or unaccustomed to the world, determined to pay a visit to the capital, and to hear, at the fountain-head, all these wonderful stories, which had probably reached them under a hundred exaggerated forms. No sooner had they entered their lodgings than they were visited and examined by the police, and their

deposition taken down as to their motives for visiting the capital, their place of birth, &c. As a gratuitous piece of information, one of them mentioned, that, passing by a barber's shop, (probably with his eyes opened wide in the expectation of seeing horrible sights) he had observed a man talking to the barber, who had a stain of blood upon his *queue*, (hair being then worn powdered and tied behind.) Trifling as this circumstance appears to us, the Viceroy ordered that the person who mentioned it should instantly conduct the police officers to the shop where he had observed it. The shop being found, the barber was questioned as to what persons he had been conversing with that morning, and mentioned about half a dozen; amongst others *Aldama*, who did not bear a very good reputation. *Aldama* was sent for, confronted with the man who gave the information, identified as the same, and the stain of blood being observed, he was immediately committed to prison upon suspicion. Being questioned as to the cause of the stain, he replied, that being at a cock-fight, on such a day, at such an hour, the blood from one of the dying cocks, which he held, had spirted up, and stained the collar of his shirt and his hair. Inquiries being made at the cock-pit, this was corroborated by several witnesses, and extraordinary as it is, it is most probable that the *assertion was true*.

But meanwhile, the mother of Blanco, deeply distressed at the dissolute courses of her son, took the resolution (which proves more than anything else Revillagigedo's goodness, and the confidence which all classes had in him,) to consult the Viceroy as to

the means of converting the young man to better habits. It seems as if the hand of an avenging Providence had conducted this unfortunate mother to take a step so fatal to her son. She told the Viceroy that she had in vain attempted to check him, that his days and nights were spent with profligate companions in gambling-houses and in cock-pits, and that she feared some mischief would come some day from his fighting and swearing and drinking ; that but a few days since he had come home late, and that she had observed that his stockings were *dabbled in blood* ; that she had questioned him upon it, and that he had answered surlily he had got it in the cock-pit. Her narration was hardly concluded, before Blanco was arrested and placed in a separate cell of the same prison with Aldama. Shortly after, Quintero, only as being the intimate friend and companion of both parties, was taken up on suspicion and lodged in the same prison, all being separately confined, and no communication permitted between them.

It seems as if Quintero, perhaps the least hardened of the three, was struck with the conviction, that in the extraordinary combination of circumstances which had led to the arrest of himself and his companions in villany, the finger of God was too distinctly visible to permit a doubt of ultimate discovery to rest upon his mind, for he confessed at once, and declaring that he saw all denial was useless, gave a circumstantial account of the whole. He begged for nine days' grace to prepare himself for death, but the Viceroy would grant but three. When Aldama

confessed, he made the avowal that he was guilty of a previous murder, when he was alcalde of a village near Mexico, which was before the time of Revillagigedo, and for which he had been tried and acquitted. He being alcalde, the postman of the village was in the habit of passing by his house, giving him an account of whatever money he had collected, &c. One evening this man stopped at Aldama's, and told him he was entrusted with a sum of fifteen hundred dollars to carry to a neighboring village. At twelve o'clock he left Aldama's house, who, taking a short cut across the fields, reached the postman by this other direction, stabbed him, and carried back the money. Next day, when the murder was made known, the alcalde, in his robes of justice, visited the body, and affected to institute a strict search for the murderer. Nevertheless, he was suspected and arrested, but escaped by bribery, and shortly after, leaving the village, came to the wider theatre of Mexico.

The murderers having thus made their confession, were ordered to prepare for death. A scaffold erected between the central gate of the palace, and that which is now the principal gate of the city guards, was hung with black to denote that the criminals were of noble blood. An immense crowd were assembled; and the Viceroy, standing on the balcony of his palace, witnessed the execution in the great square, the *very day week* that the murders were committed. . . .

The streets were then kept in perfect order, both as to paving and lighting; and on one occasion, having rode all through the city, as was his custom, to

observe whether everything was in order for the Holy Week, he observed that several parts of the different streets were unpaved, and out of repair ; whereupon, sending for the head of the police, he desired that these streets should be paved and in order before the Holy Week, of which it wanted but a few days. The officer declared the thing to be impossible. The Viceroy ordered it to be done, on the penalty of losing his place. Early on the morning of Palm Sunday, he sent to know if all was in readiness ; and as the bells tolled for early mass, the last stone was laid on the Calle San Francisco, which completed the work. . . .

It is said he frequently went about *incog.*, attended by one or two aids-de-camp, by which means, like another Haroun Al Raschid, he was enabled to discover and correct hidden abuses. By his orders, no monk could be out of his convent after vespers. Walking one evening along the streets, he encountered a monk in the Calle San Francisco, taking his pleasure long after the appointed hour. The Viceroy walked directly to the convent ; and on making himself known, was received by the Abbot with all due respect. “How many monks have you in your convent, father ?” asked the Viceroy. “Fifty, your Excellency.” “There are now only forty-nine. Call them over, see which is the missing brother, and let his name be struck out.” The list was produced — the names called over, and only forty-five monks presented themselves. By order of the Viceroy, the five who had broken through the rules, were never again admitted into the convent. Alas ! Could his

Excellency have lived in these our degenerate days, and beheld certain monks of a certain order drinking pulque and otherwise disporting themselves! nay, seen one, as we but just now did from the window, strolling along the street by lamplight, with an *Yndita* (Indian girl) tucked under his arm! . . .

One more anecdote of the “immortal Revillagigedo,” and I have done. It was very late at night, when not far from the gate of the city called “the lost child,” (in commemoration of that period when “*the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem,*” and that his parents sought for him sorrowing,) his Excellency encountered a good-looking damsel, walking briskly and alone, at these untimely hours; yet withal quiet and modest in her demeanor. Wishing to try the temper of her steel (or brass) he left his officers a little way behind; and perhaps they were not astonished. . . “Oh! by no means, certainly not!” — When they saw the grave and severe Revillagigedo approach the fair maiden somewhat familiarly, and request permission to accompany her in her rambles, a proposal which was indignantly rejected. “*Anda!*” (Come!) said his Excellency; “give over these airs — you, a *mugercilla*, strolling about in search of adventures.” Imagine the feelings of his Excellency, on receiving in reply a tremendous and well-applied box on the ear! The staff rushed forward, and were astonished to find the Viceroy with a smiling countenance, watching the retreating steps of the adventurous damsel. “What! Your Excellency — such insolence! such audacity! such ——.” “Come, come,” said the Vicero-

“ she has proved herself worthy of our favor. Let instant inquiry be made as to her birth and parentage, and as to her reasons for being on the streets at this hour. They must be honest ones.” The result proved the Viceroy correct in his opinion. She was a poor girl, supporting a dying mother by giving music-lessons, and obliged to trudge on foot from house to house at all hours ; and amongst her scholars was the daughter of an old lady who lived out of the gates of the city, and from whose house, being that of her last visited pupil, she had frequently to return late at night. On being informed of these particulars, his Excellency ordered her a pension of three hundred dollars per annum, to be continued to the day of her death, and it is said she is still alive, though very old. This is making one’s fortune by a *coup de main*, or by a *lucky hit* !

6th August. — This morning we had some very good music ; Madame Castellan and the Tenor, and Madame Cesari having passed some hours here, together with Madame la Baronne de — and a few other gentlemen and ladies. La Castellan was very amiable, and sang beautifully, but looked pale and fatigued. She has been very effective lately in the *Somnambula*. Madame Cesari was in great beauty. . . .

About an hour after they had gone, the new Minister and his family made their *entrée* into Mexico. It is now, however, too late for us to return till the autumn, as there is a great deal of fever at Vera Cruz ; nor do we entirely give up hopes, as soon as C——n shall be at leisure, of making another jour-

ney on horseback into the interior. There are, however, rumors of another pronunciamiento, and should this be the case, our present quarters next to the palace will be more distinguished than agreeable. . . .

I have always had a curiosity to know why the Calle del Indio Triste (street of the Sad Indian) was so called. We are on visiting terms with two or three *houses* in that street, and never pass those large black letters, which tell the passenger that this is the street of "*The Sad Indian*," without my imagination figuring to itself that here some tragedy connected with the conquest must have taken place. It was therefore with great joy that I fell upon an article in the "*Mosaico Mejicano*," purporting to give an explanation of this melancholy titlepage to an otherwise very tolerable (in the way of houses) but very ill-paved street, where, amongst other handsome edifices, is the house of a rich Spaniard, (Señor R——o) remarkable for its beautiful entrance and elegant *salons*. It appears that there are different traditions respecting it. One, that shortly after the conquest, a rich cacique lived there, who acted as a spy on his Indian brethren, and informed the Viceroy of all their plans and combinations against the government ; but that on one occasion, having failed to inform his patrons of an intended mutiny, they seized this pretext for sequestering his property ; — that afterwards, poor, abandoned and despised, he sat down in the corner of the street, weeping his misfortune and meeting with no pity ; until at length he abstained from all food for some days, and was

found dead in the corner of the street, sitting in the same melancholy posture ; that the Viceroy declared his wealth crown property, and with the intention of striking terror into the hearts of the malecontents, caused a stone statue to be made representing the weeping Indian ; that this statue was placed at the corner of the street, with its back to the wall, and so remained until the house, being pulled down, the statue was sent to the Museum, where it now is ; the street retaining the name of the Sad Indian.

But there is another tradition mentioned concerning the origin of the name, more interesting and even more probable. It appears that the ground now occupied by this street is the site of the Palace of Axayacatl, the father of Montezuma, last Emperor of Mexico. In this spacious and magnificent palace the Spaniards were received and lodged, and, according to Torquemada, each in a separate apartment. There were a multitude of idols in this dwelling, and though they had no separate temple, various feasts were dedicated to them. After the conquest they were for the most part broken and destroyed, and it was only lately that, by accident, the head of the god of the waters, beautifully worked in serpentine marble, was discovered there ; still, one statue had been preserved, that of an Indian, said to have been placed there by the Aztecs, as a memorial of their sorrow at the death of Montezuma, to whom, on account of his misfortunes, they gave the name of "*el Indio triste*." This was afterwards placed at the corner of the new building erected there by the Spaniards, and gave its name to the street. It is a

melancholy-looking statue, whomsoever it may represent, of an Indian in a sitting posture, with a most dejected and forlorn air and countenance. The material is basaltic stone.

11th. — C——n has just returned from seeing the general archives, which are all in confusion and going to ruin. Don Ygnacio Cuevas, who has the charge of them, has written various works — the History of the Viceroy — the Californias, &c. — which were robbed or destroyed in the last pronunciamiento. He related the story of Revillagigedo and the jewels, only differing from *my* friend's narrative in that he says it was not a jewel-case, but a diamond bracelet. He assured C——n that Mexico in Indian means "below this," alluding to the population who, according to tradition, are buried beneath the *Pedregal*.

18th. — News has arrived that General Paredes *pronounced* in Guadalajara on the eighth of the month ! Strange rumors are afloat, and it is generally supposed that Santa Anna is or will be the prime mover of the great changes that are predicted. By many, however, it is talked of as very trifling, as a mere movement that will soon be put down. The plan which Paredes has published is essentially military, but announces a Congress, which renders it very popular in the departments. It has been adopted by the departments of Zacatecas, Durango and Guana-joato. Meanwhile, everything continues here as usual. We have been several times at the opera ; the *paseos* are very crowded, and we had a musical soiree the other evening, which was very gay, but

from the signs of the times, will probably be our last in Mexico.

28th. — This morning C——n took his farewell audience of the President, and the new Minister was received.

30th. — These few last days have chiefly been spent in paying visits of ceremony with the Señora ——. Nevertheless, we spent an hour last evening in the beautiful cemetery a little way out of the city, which is rather a favorite haunt of ours, and is known as the "*Pantéon de Santa Maria*." It has a beautiful chapel attached to it, where daily mass is said for the dead, and a large garden filled with flowers. Young trees of different kinds have been planted there, and the sight of the tombs themselves, in their long and melancholy array of black coffins, with gold lettered inscriptions, even while it inspires the saddest ideas, has something soothing in its effect. They are kept in perfect order, and the inscriptions, though not always eloquent, are almost always full of feeling, and sometimes extremely touching. There is one near the entrance, which is pathetic in its native language, and though it loses much in the translation, I shall transcribe it:

"Here lie the beloved remains of Carmen and José Pimentel y Heras. The first died the 11th of June, 1838, aged one year and eleven months; the second on the 5th of September of 1839, in the sixteenth month of his existence; and to their dear memory maternal love dedicates the following

“EPITAPH.

“Babes of my love ! my Carmen and José !
Sons of your cherished father, Pimentel !
Why have you left your mother’s side ? for whom ?
What motives have ye had to leave me thus ?
But hark ! I hear your voice — and breathlessly
I listen. I hear ye say — “ To go to heaven !
Mother ! we have left thee to see our God ! ”
Beloved shades ! if this indeed be so,
Then let these bitter tears be turned to joy !
It is not meet that I should mourn for ye,
Since me ye have exchanged for my God !
To Him give thanks ! and in your holy songs,
Pray that your parents’ fate may be like yours.”

LETTER THE FORTY-FOURTH.

Agitation — Storm — Revolution — Manifesto — Resembling a game of chess — Position of the pieces — Appearance of the city — Firing — State of parties — Comparisons — “ *Comicios* ” — The people — Congress — Santa Anna — Amnesty offered — Roaring of cannon — Proclamation — Time to *look at home* — The will of the nation — Different feelings — Judge’s house destroyed — The mint in requisition — Preparations — Cannonading — “ *Los Enanos*. ”

31st.

THIS afternoon the clouds, gathered together in gloomy masses, announced a thunder storm, and at the same time a certain degree of agitation apparently pervading the city, was suddenly observable from our balconies. Shops were shutting up ; people hurrying in all directions, heads at all the windows, and men looking out from the azoteas ; but as these symptoms were immediately followed by a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning and splashing rain, we trusted that the cause had been very simple. But these elements of nature are wielded by the Hand that called them forth, and can stay them at His will, and the sun breaking forth smilingly and scattering the clouds, made us feel that the storm had but refreshed the parched earth and cleared the sultry atmosphere. Not so with the storm which

has been brooding in the hearts of a handful of ambitious men, and which has burst forth at last, its bolts directed by no wise or merciful power, but by the hands of selfish and designing and short-sighted mortals.

The storm, though short, had not passed away, when news was brought us of a new *revolution in Mexico!* General Valencia, he who pronounced (but two short months ago!) the high-flown and flattering speech to the President, on receiving the sword of honor, has now *pronounced* in a very different and much clearer manner. Listen to him now:

“Soldiers! The despotism of the Mexican government, the innumerable evils which the nation suffers, the unceasing remonstrances which have been made against these evils, and which have met with no attention, have forced us to take a step this evening, which is not one of rebellion, but is the energetic expression of our resolution to sacrifice everything to the common good and interest. The cause which we defend is that of all Mexicans; of the rich as of the poor; of the soldier as of the civilian. We want a country, a government, the felicity of our homes, and respect from without; and we shall obtain all; let us not doubt it. The nation will be moved by our example. The arms which our country has given us for her defence we shall know how to employ in restoring her honor — an honor which the government has stained by not acknowledging the total absence of morality and energy in the actual authorities. The army which made her independent shall also render her powerful and free. The illustrious General Santa

Anna to-day marches to Puebla, at the head of our heroic companions of Vera Cruz, while upon Queretaro, already united to the valiant General Paredes, the brave General Cortazar now begins his operations.

“ In a few days we shall see the other forces of the republic in motion, all coöperating to the same end. The triumph is secure, my friends, and the cause which we proclaim is so noble, that, conquerors, we shall be covered with glory; and, happen what may, we shall be honored by our fellow-citizens.”

In this manifesto, which is mere declamation, there is no plan. It appears that no one particularly counted upon General Valencia, and that, whether fearing to be left out in the events which he saw approaching, or apprehensive of being arrested by the government, who suspected him, he has thought it wisest to strike a blow on his own account. Pacheco, who commanded the citadel, together with Generals Lombardini and Sales, who had been ordered out to march with their respective regiments against the *pronunciados*, are now in the citadel, and in a state of revolt. The two last had but just received money for the payment of their troops, on the preceding day.

8 o'clock. — Nothing further, but that the President has sallied forth on horseback from San Agustin, and was received with repeated *vivas* by the people collected in the square.

1st September. — This revolution is like a game at chess, in which kings, castles, knights and bishops

are making different moves, while the pawns are looking on and taking no part whatever.

To understand the state of the board, it is necessary to explain the position of the four principal pieces — Santa Anna, Bustamante, Paredes, and Valencia. The first move was made by Paredes, who published his plan, and *pronounced* on the eighth of August in Guadalajara. About the same time, Don F—— M——, a Spanish broker, who had gone to Manga de Clavo, was sent to Guadalajara, and had a conference with Paredes, the result of which was that the plan of that General was withdrawn, and it was supposed that he and Santa Anna had formed a combination. Shortly after, the Censor of Vera Cruz, a newspaper entirely devoted to Santa Anna, pronounced in favor of the plan of Paredes, and Santa Anna, with a few miserable troops, and a handful of cavalry, arrived at Perote. Here he remains for the present, kept in check by the (government) General Torrejon. Meanwhile, Paredes, with about six hundred men, left Guadalajara and marched upon Guanajuato; and there a blow was given to the government party by the defection of General Cortazar, who thought fit thus to show his grateful sense of having just received the rank of General of brigade, with the insignia of this new grade, which the President put up with his own hands. Another *check to the President*. Once begun, defection spread rapidly; and Paredes and Cortazar having advanced upon Quéretaro, found that General Juvera, with his garrison, had already *pronounced* there, at the moment that they were expected in Mexico to assist the govern-

ment against Valencia. Paredes, Cortazar, and Juvera are now united, and their forces amount to two thousand two hundred men.

Meanwhile General Valencia, pressed to declare *his plan*, has replied, that he awaits the announcement of the intentions of Generals Paredes and Santa Anna ; and, for his own part, only desires the dismissal of General Bustamante.

This, then, is the position of the three principal *pronounced* chiefs, on this second day of September of the year of our Lord 1841. Santa Anna in Perote, hesitating whether to advance or retreat, and in fact prevented from doing either, by the vicinity of General Torrejon. Paredes in Queretaro, with the other revolted generals. Valencia in the citadel of Mexico, with his *pronunciados* ; while Bustamante, with Generals Almonte and Canalizo, the *mark* against which all these hostile operations are directed, is determined, it is said, to fight to the last.

Mexico looks as if it had got a general holiday. Shops are shut up, and all business is at a stand. The people, with the utmost apathy, are collected in groups, talking quietly ; officers are galloping about ; generals, in a somewhat party-colored dress, with large gray hats, striped pantaloons, old coats, and generals' belts, fine horses and crimson velvet saddles. The shopkeepers in the square have been removing their goods and money. An occasional shot is heard, and sometimes a volley, succeeded by a dead silence. The Archbishop shows his reverend face now and then upon the opposite balcony of his palace, looks out a little while, and then retires.

The chief effect, so far, is universal idleness in man and beast, — the soldiers and their quadrupeds excepted.

The position of the President, however, is not so bad as at first sight it might appear, or as it will be, if his enemies are permitted to reunite. He has upwards of two thousand men, twelve pieces of ordnance, and, though his infantry are few, and he has little artillery, he has good cavalry. Valencia has twelve hundred men, twenty-six pieces of ordnance, with good infantry, and almost all the artillery. The rebels have possessed themselves of the *Acordada*, and given liberty to those who were imprisoned for political opinions; a good loophole for the escape of criminals.

Those who understand these matters say, that the principal object of the government should be to reduce the rebels to the citadel only, and to occupy all the important points in its neighborhood, San Diego, San Hipolito, San Fernando, &c.; but as yet this has not been done, and the *pronunciados* are gradually extending, and taking possession of these points. . . .

3d. — They are now keeping up a pretty brisk fire between San Agustin and the citadel. This morning the streets were covered with coaches filled with families leaving the city.

4th. — Things are becoming more complicated. The rebels now occupy San José, Salto de Agua, the college of Vizcaynas, (from which all the poor girls and their teachers have fled) Regina, San Juan de la Penitencia, San Diego, and San Fernando, a

long line of important points. The President's line begins at San Francisco, continuing by La Concepcion ; but without a map of the city, you will not understand the position of the two parties. However, every turret and belfry is covered with soldiers, and the streets are blocked up with troops and trenches. From behind these turrets and trenches they fire at each other, scarcely a soldier falling, but numbers of peaceful citizens ; shells and bombs falling through the roofs of the houses, — and all this for “ *the public good.*”

The war of July had at least a shadow of pretext ; it was a war of party, and those who wished to reëstablish federalism, may have acted with good faith. Now there is neither principle, nor pretext, nor plan, nor the shadow of reason or legality. Disloyalty, hypocrisy, and the most sordid calculation, are all the motives that can be discovered, and those who then affected an ardent desire for the welfare of their country, have now thrown aside their masks, and appear in their true colors. And the great mass of the people, who, thus passive and oppressed, allow their quiet homes to be invaded, are kept in awe neither by the force of arms, nor by the depth of the views of the conspirators, but by a handful of soldiers, who are themselves scarcely aware of their own wishes or intentions, but that they desire power and distinction at any price.

It is said that the federalists are very much elated, hoping for the eventual triumph of their party, particularly in consequence of a proclamation by Valencia, which appeared two days ago, and is called “ the

plan of the *Comicios*,” said to be written by General Tomel, who has gone over to the citadel, and who, having a great deal of classical learning, talks in it of the Roman *Committees* — (the *Comicios*.) Since then, the revolution has taken the name of liberal, and is supported by men of name, the Pedrazas, Balderas, Riva Palacio and others, which is of great importance to Valencia, and has given force and consistency to his party. Besides this, the *pronunciados* have the advantage of a free field from the citadel out to Tacubaya, where it is said that certain rich bankers, who are on their side, are constantly supplying the citadel with cartloads of copper, which they send in from thence. . . .

Meanwhile, we pass our time very quietly. In the morning we generally have visitors very early, discussing the probabilities, and giving us the last reports. Sometimes we venture out when there is no firing, which is much less constant and alarming than it was last year. So far, we continue to have visitors in the evening, and Señor B—— and I have been playing duets on the harp and piano, even though Mexico is declared “in a state of siege.” The —— Minister, who was here this morning, does however, strongly recommend us to change our quarters, and to remove to Tacubaya; which will be so troublesome, that we are inclined to delay it until it becomes perfectly necessary. . . .

5th. — We went upon the azotea this afternoon, to have a good view of the city. There were people on almost all the balconies, as on a fête-day. A picturesque group of friars of the order of La Merced,

in their white robes, had mounted up on the belfry of their church, and were looking out anxiously. The palace roof next our own, had soldiers on it. Everything at that moment was still and tranquil; but the conduct of the people is our constant source of surprise. Left entirely uncurbed, no one to direct them, thousands out of employment, many without bread, they meddle with nothing, do not complain, and scarcely seem to feel any interest in the result. How easily might such a people be directed for their good! It is said that all their *apathetic sympathies* are in favor of Bustamante. . . .

Some say that Santa Anna will arrive to-day; some, that the whole affair will be settled by treaty; but neither reports nor bulletins can be depended on, as scarcely any one speaks according to his true feelings or belief, but according to his political party. . . .

It appears that the conduct of Congress in this emergency, has given little satisfaction. They affect to give a declaration of the national will, and are ambiguous as the Delphic Oracle; and it is said that their half-measures, and determination not to see that public opinion is against them, and that a thorough change can alone undermine this military revolution, will contribute more than anything to its eventual triumph.

The President has made use of the extraordinary powers which have been granted him by the *Poder Conservador* (conservative power, a singular and intermediate authority introduced into the Mexican constitution,) to abolish the ten per cent. on consumption, and to modify the personal contribution,

reducing it to the richer classes alone. This concession has apparently produced no effect. It is said that the government troops continue to desert, convinced that a revolution in which *Santa Anna* takes part, must triumph. Four new generals have been made by the President. . . .

6th. — We went out to Tacubaya, and found it impossible to procure a room there, far less a house. This is also the case in Guadalupe, San Joaquin, in fact in every village near Mexico. We are in no particular danger, unless they were to bombard the palace. There was a slight shock of an earthquake yesterday.

10th. — On the 7th, the President offered an amnesty to the *pronunciados*. Whatever might have been the result, the evening concluded with a terrible thunder storm, mingled with the roaring of cannon, which had a most lugubrious effect. Many people were killed on the street. We had gone out in the morning, but met the Ex-Minister H——a, who strongly advised us to return home directly, as balls were falling, and accidents happening all round.

Soon after, a proclamation was issued by General Valencia, purporting that if the President would not yield, he would bombard the palace ; and that if the powder which is kept there were to blow up, it would ruin half the city. This induced us to look at home, for if the palace is bombarded, the Casa de Moneda cannot escape, and if the palace is blown up, the Casa de Moneda will most certainly keep it company. When the proclamation came out

in the morning, various were the opinions expressed in consequence. Some believed it to be a mere threat, and others that it would take place at eleven at night. An old supernumerary soldier who lives here, (one of those who was disabled by the last revolution) assured us that we had better leave the house, and as we refused, on the plea of having no safer house to go to, he walked off to the azotea, telling us he would *let us know* when the first bomb fell on the palace, and that then we must go perforce. In the evening we went down stairs to the large vaulted rooms where they are making cannon-balls, and where the vaults are so thick and solid, that it was thought we should be in safety, even if General Valencia really kept his word. We sat up that night till twelve o'clock, listening anxiously, but nothing happened; and now, in consequence of a deputation which has been sent to the citadel by certain foreigners of distinction, (though unknown to the government) we are no longer afraid of any sudden assault of this kind, as General Valencia has promised, in consideration of their representations, not to proceed to these last extremities unless driven to them for his own defence. . . .

In listening to the different opinions which are current, it would seem that Bustamante, Santa Anna and Valencia are all equally unpopular; and that the true will of the nation, which Congress was afraid to express, was first for the immediate convocation of a Constitutional Congress; and secondly, that they should not be governed by Santa Anna, yet that Bustamante should renounce, and a provisional President be named. . . .

Santa Anna writes, complaining that Bustamante, by assuming extraordinary powers, commanding the army and yet continuing President, is infringing the constitution. But as he is coming on to destroy it entirely, this is being rather particular. It is reported that the typhus fever is in the citadel, but there are many floating rumors, which are not to be depended upon. . . . There is evidently a great deal of consternation beginning to be felt amongst the lower classes. Foreigners generally are inclined towards Santa Anna, Mexicans to Bustamante ; but all feel the present evils. The léperos seem to swarm in greater numbers than ever, and last evening two small shops were broken into and robbed. In vain the President publishes manifestos that the shops may be opened ; they remain carefully shut, all commerce paralyzed, and every one who has the means to do so, leaving the city.

We hear that the shells from the citadel have destroyed part of the beautiful house belonging to Judge Peña y Peñas, in front of the Alameda.

11th. — We have just received private information from the government, that they will shortly require this house for arms and ammunition and troops ; coupled with still more private advice to provide for our safety by leaving it. We shall therefore gladly accept the kind invitation of the F——a family, to remove to their hacienda of San Xavier, about three leagues from this. We had at first declined this invitation, owing to its distance from the city — inconvenient for us, who are only waiting for the first opportunity to leave it ; but besides that after the most

diligent search in all the surrounding villages, we cannot find a single unoccupied room, we are very glad to spend our remaining days in Mexico with so distinguished a family. I shall therefore write little more at present on the subject of the revolution, which now that we have lived some time in Mexico, and have formed friendships there, fills us with feelings entirely different from those which the last produced ; with personal sentiments of regret, private fears and hopes for the future, and presentiments of evil which owe more than half their sadness to individual feelings.

12th. — We are now in the midst of all the confusion occasioned by another removal ; surrounded by trunks and boxes and *cargadores*, and at the same time by our friends, (all those who have not taken flight yet) taking leave of us. . . .

A great cannonading took place last night, but without any important result. The soldiers in the day-time, amuse themselves by insulting each other from the roofs of the houses and convents. Yesterday, one of the President's party, singled out a soldier in the citadel, shot him, and then began to dance the *Enanos*, and in the midst of a step, *he* was shot, and rolled over, dead. . . .

We shall write again from San Xavier.

LETTER THE FORTY-FIFTH.

Leave Mexico — Travelling equipage — San Xavier — Fine hacienda — Millionaires — Well-educated ladies — Garden, &c. — Tlanapantla — Indian hut — Mrs. Ward — Doña Margarita — The *pronunciamiento* — False step — Santa Anna in Puebla — Neutrality — General Paredes — President in Tlanapantla — Tired troops — Their march — Their return — Curate's house — Murder — General Paredes in the Lecheria — President in Tlanapantla — A meeting — Return of the President and his troops — General Paredes and his men — Santa Anna in Tacubaya — A junction — President in Mexico — *Allied sovereigns* — Plan — Articles — President declares for federalism — Resigns — Results — Hostilities — Capitulation — Triumphant entry — Te Deum — New ministry.

SAN XAVIER, 16th September.

AFTER a morning of fatigue, confusion, bustle, leave-taking, &c., &c., a coach with four mules, procured with the utmost difficulty, drove up to the door; the coach old and crazy, the mules and harness quite consistent, and the postilions so tipsy that they could hardly keep their seats. But we had no time to be particular, and climbed in amidst bows and handshakings, and prophecies of breaking down and of being robbed by a band of *forçats* headed by a Spaniard, who are said to be scouring the country; who are *said* to be, for just now, seeing is believing, and few reports are worth attending to. However, we took two servants on horseback, by way of escort, and rattled off, the coach creaking ominously, the

postilions swinging from side to side, and our worthy housekeeper, whom we had carried off from the smoking city, screaming out her last orders to the *galopina*, concerning a certain green parrot which she had left in the charge of that tender-hearted damsel, who, with her *reboso* at her eyes, surrounded by directors of the mint, secretaries of legation, soldiers and porters, had enough to do to take charge of herself. The city looked very sad, as we drove through the streets; with closed shops, and barred windows, and cannon planted, and soldiers riding about. At every village we passed, the drivers called for brandy, tossed off a glassful, which appeared to act like a composing draught, as they gradually recovered their equilibrium. We were glad to arrive at San Xavier, where we received a most cordial welcome, and to be removed, at least for a while, from sights and sounds of destruction. A great part of the road to *Tlanapantla*, the village near which San Xavier is situated, leads through traces of the ruins of the ancient Tenochtitlan.

This part of the country is extremely pretty, being a corn and not a maguey district. Instead of the monotonous and stiff magueys, whose head never bends to the blast, we are surrounded by fields of waving corn. There are also plenty of trees; poplar, ash and elm; and one flourishing specimen of the latter species, which we see from the windows in front of the house, was brought here by Mr. Poinsett. The hacienda, which is about three leagues from Mexico, is a large irregular building in rather a low situation, surrounded by dark blue hills. It belongs

to the Señoras de F——a, of the family of the Marquis de A——o ; *millionaires* — being rich in haciendas and silver mines ; very religious, very charitable, and what is less common here, extremely learned ; understanding French, English, German and even Latin. Their education they owe to the care of their father, one of the most distinguished men in Mexico, who was banished twice, once for liberal opinions, and the second time for supporting the “Plan of Iguala,” in fact, for not being liberal enough. In these emigrations, his family accompanied him, travelled over a great part of Europe, and profited by their opportunities. They returned here when the independence was accomplished, hoping for peace, but in vain. Constant alarms, and perpetual revolutions have succeeded one another ever since that period.

The hacienda has the usual *quantum* of furniture belonging to these country houses ; and it is certainly no longer a matter of surprise to us, that rich proprietors take little interest in embellishing them. A house which will in all probability be converted once a year into a barrack, is decidedly better in a state of nature, than encumbered with elegant furniture. This house has been entirely destroyed in that way more than once ; and the last time that it was occupied by troops, was left like an Augean stable. We have here the luxury of books. My room opens into a beautiful chapel, covered with paintings representing saints and virgins holding lilies, where mass is said occasionally, though the family generally attend mass in the village church of Tlanapantla. Before the

house is a small flower garden filled with roses and peculiarly fine dahlias, pomegranate trees and violets, which, though single, have a delicious fragrance. This stretches out into an immense vegetable garden and orchard, terminating in a shrubbery, through which walks are cut, impervious to the sun at noon-day. There is also a large reservoir of water, and the garden, which covers a great space of ground, is kept in good order. There are beautiful walks in the neighborhood, leading to Indian villages, old churches and farms ; and all the lanes are bordered with fruit trees.

Tlanapantla, which means in Indian *between lands*, its church having been built by the Indians of two districts, is a small village, with an old church, ruined remains of a convent, where the curate now lives, a few shops, and a square where the Indians hold market, (*tangis* they call it) on Fridays. All along the lanes are small Indian huts, with their usual mud floor, small altar, earthen vessels, and collection of daubs on the walls ; especially of the Virgin of Guadalupe ; with a few blest palm-leaves in the corner ; occupied when the men are at work, by the Indian woman herself, her sturdy, scantily-clothed progeny, and plenty of yelping dogs. Mrs. Ward's sketch of the interior of an Indian hut, is perfect, as all her Mexican sketches are. When the women are also out at their work, they are frequently tenanted by the little children alone. Taking refuge from a shower of rain yesterday, in one of these mud huts, we found no one there but a little bronze-colored child, about three years old, sleeping all alone on the

floor, with the door wide open ; and though we talked loud, and walked about in the cottage, the little thing never wakened. A second shower drove us for shelter to a farm house, where we entered a sort of oratorio attached to the house ; a room which is not consecrated, but has an altar, crucifix, holy pictures, &c. The floor was strewn with flowers, and in one corner was an old stringless violoncello, that might have formed a pendant to the harp of Tara.

However, the most remarkable object of the rancho, is its proprietress, a tall, noble-looking Indian, Doña Margarita by name, a mountaineer by birth, and now a rich widow, possessing lands and flocks, though living in apparent poverty. The bulk of her fortune she employs in educating poor orphans. Every poor child who has no parents, finds in her a mother and protectress ; the more wretched, or sick, or deformed, the more certain of an asylum with her. She takes them into her house, brings them up as her own children, has them bred to some useful employment, and when they are old enough, married. If it is a boy, she chooses him a wife from amongst the girls of the mountains, where she was born, who she says are "less corrupted" than the girls of the village. She has generally from twelve to twenty on her hands, always filling up with new orphans the vacancies caused in her small colony by death or marriage. There is nothing picturesque about these orphans, for, as I said before, the most deformed and helpless, and maimed and sick, are the peculiar objects of Doña Margarita's care ; nevertheless, we saw various healthy, happy-

looking girls, busied in various ways, washing and ironing, and sewing, whose very eyes gleamed when we mentioned her name, and who spoke of her with a respect and affection that it was pleasant to witness. Truly, this woman is entitled to happy dreams and soft slumbers! The remainder of her fortune she employs in the festivals and ceremonies of the church; in fireworks, in ornaments for the altars, &c.

19th. — Every day a messenger arrives from Mexico, bringing news of the *pronunciamiento*, which are eagerly waited for, and read with intense interest. It is probable, now, that affairs will soon come to a crisis. A step has been taken by the President, which is considered very imprudent by those who are looking on in this great game. General Torrejon, who with nine hundred good soldiers kept Santa Anna in awe at Perote, has been sent for to Mexico, Bustamante wishing to reunite his forces. These troops, together with those of Codallos, (the Governor of Puebla) bring up his army to three thousand five hundred, or some say to four thousand men, all effective, and of which nine hundred are good cavalry. Bustamante being now at the head of the army, Hechavarria exercises the executive power, according to the constitution, in his capacity of President of the Council of State, (*Consejo de Estado*; the Mexicans having no Vice-President.)

Santa Anna, who had until now remained in Perote with his unorganized troops, no officers on whom he could depend, and a handful of miserable cavalry, has moved forwards to Puebla. Arrived there, his numbers were increased by one hundred men of the

Tobacco customs, (brought him by Señor ———, who with a rich Spanish banker went out to meet him,) forty horsemen seduced from the escort of Codallos, and a company of watchmen! As yet, no movement has taken place or seems likely to take place in his favor in Puebla. Señor Haro is named Governor of that city in the place of Codallos, who was sent for to join the President in Mexico; and Puebla, which used to be the great theatre of revolutions, has remained on this occasion in the most perfect neutrality, neither declaring for one party or the other; probably the wisest course to pursue at this juncture. Every one is of opinion that five hundred troops sent by Bustamante, would instantly put this mongrel army of Santa Anna's to flight; for though he has collected about a thousand men, he has not three hundred good soldiers. . . .

On the other hand, General Paredes is marching in this direction with General Cortazar, his orders from Santa Anna no doubt being to keep the President in play, and to divert his attention by treaties or preliminaries of treaties, whilst he continues to march with caution towards the capital. The great event to be dreaded by the government is a junction of the pronunciado forces. As long as they are separate, it is in no immediate danger; but like the bundle of rods, what can easily be broken separately, will assume strength when joined together. I make no further excuse for talking about politics. We talk and think of little else. . . .

21st. — Yesterday (Sunday) we were startled by the intelligence, that Generals Canalizo and Noriega

had arrived at the village in the middle of the night, with a large troop, and that General Bustamante himself had made his appearance there at five in the morning; so that the peaceful little Tlanapantla had suddenly assumed a warlike appearance. As it lies on the direct road to Guanajuato there could be no doubt that they were marching to meet Paredes. C——n immediately walked down to the village to pay his respects to the President, who was lodged at the curate's, and meanwhile General Noriega came to the hacienda to see the ladies. C——n found the President very much fatigued, having passed fourteen days and nights under arms, and in constant anxiety. General Orbegoso was with him.

After breakfast we went down to the village to see the troops, who were resting there for a few hours. The cavalry occupied the square, the horses standing, and the men stretched asleep on the ground, each soldier beside his horse. The infantry occupied the church-yard. Dreadfully fatigued, they were lying some on the grass and others with their heads pillowed on the old tomb-stones, resting as well as they could with their armor on. Before they started, the curate said mass to them in the square. There was a good deal of difficulty in procuring the most common food for so many hungry men. Tortillas had been baked in haste, and all the hens in the village were put in requisition to obtain eggs for the President and his officers. We sat down in a porch to see them set off, a melancholy sight enough, in spite of drums beating and trumpets sounding. An old soldier, who came up to water his own and

his master's horse, began to talk to us of what was going on, and seemed anything but enthusiastic at the prospects of himself and his comrades, assuring us that the army of General Paredes was double their number. He was covered with wounds received in the war against Texas, and expressed his firm conviction that we should see the Comanche Indians on the streets of Mexico one of these days, at which savage tribe he appeared to have a most devout horror; describing to a gaping audience the manner in which he had seen a party of them devour three of their prisoners. . . .

About four o'clock the signal for departure was sounded, and they went off amidst the cheers of the people.

22d. — Great curiosity was excited yesterday afternoon when news was brought us that Bustamante, with his generals and troops, had returned, and had passed through the village, on their way back to Mexico! Some say that this retrograde march is in consequence of a movement made in Mexico by General Valencia — others that it has been caused by a message received from General Paredes. We paid a visit in the evening to the old curate, who was pretty much in the dark, morally and figuratively, in a very large hall, where were assembled a number of females, and one tallow candle. Of course all were talking politics, and especially discoursing of the visit of the President the preceding night, and of his departure in the morning, and of his return in the afternoon, and of the difficulty of procuring tortillas for the men, and eggs for the officers.

23*d.* — We have received news this morning of the murder of our porter, the Spaniard whom we brought here from Havana. He had left us, and was employed as porter in a *fabrica*, (manufactory) where the wife and family of the proprietor resided. Eight of General Valencia's soldiers sallied forth from the citadel to rob this factory, and poor José, the most faithful and honest of servants, having valiantly defended the door, was cruelly murdered. They afterwards entered the building, robbed, and committed dreadful outrages. They are selling printed papers through the streets to-day, giving an account of it. The men are taken up, and it is said will be shot by orders of the General; but we doubt this, even though a message has arrived, requiring the attendance of the *padre* who confesses criminals, a Franciscan monk, who, with various of his brethren, are living out here for safety at present. . . .

The situation of Mexico is melancholy.

24*th.* — News has arrived that General Paredes has arrived at the *Lecheria*, an hacienda belonging to this family, about three leagues from San Xavier; and that from thence he sent one of the servants of the farm to Mexico, inviting the President to a personal conference. The family take this news of their hacienda's being turned into military quarters very philosophically; the only precaution on these occasions being to conceal the best horses, as the *pronunciados* help themselves, without ceremony, to these useful quadrupeds, wherever they are to be found.

26*th.* — This morning, General Bustamante and his troops arrived at Tlanapantla, the President in a coach.

Having met C——n on the road, he stopped for a few moments and informed him that he was on his way to meet General Paredes at the *Lecheria*, where he hoped to come to a composition with him. We listened all day with anxiety, but hearing no firing, concluded that some arrangement had in fact been made. In the evening we walked out on the high road, and met the President, the Governor and the troops all returning. What securities Bustamante can have received, no one can imagine, but it is certain that they have met without striking a blow. It was nearly dusk as they passed, and the President bowed cheerfully, while some of the officers rode up, and assured us that all was settled.

Sunday, 27th. — Cavalry, infantry, carriages, canons, &c. are all passing through the village. These are the *pronunciados* with General Paredes, following to Mexico. Feminine curiosity induces me to stop here, and to join the party who are going down to the village to see them pass. . . .

We have just returned after a sunny walk, and an *inspection* of the *pronunciados*; they are too near Mexico now for me to venture to call them *the rebels*. The infantry, it must be confessed, was in a very ragged and rather drunken condition — the cavalry better; having *borrowed* fresh horses as they went along. Though certainly not *point-device* in their accoutrements, their good horses, high saddles, bronze faces and picturesque attire had a fine effect as they passed along under the burning sun. The sick followed on asses, and amongst them various masculine women, with *sarapes* or *mangas*, and large straw hats,

tied down with colored handkerchiefs, mounted on mules or horses. The sumpter mules followed, carrying provisions, camp-beds, &c. ; and various Indian women trotted on foot in the rear, carrying their husbands' boots and clothes. There was certainly no beauty amongst these feminine followers of the camp ; especially amongst the mounted Amazons, who looked like very ugly men in a semi-female disguise. The whole party are on their way to Tacubaya, to join Santa Anna ! The game is nearly up now. *Check from two Knights and a Castle ;* from Santa Anna and Paredes in Tacubaya, and from Valencia in the citadel. People are flying in all directions ; some from Mexico, and others from Guadalupe and Tacubaya. . . .

It appears that Santa Anna was marching from Puebla, feeling his way towards the capital in fear and trembling. At Rio Frio a sentinel's gun having accidentally gone off, the whole army were thrown into the most ludicrous consternation and confusion. Near Oyotla, the General's brow cleared up, for here he was met by commissioners from the government, General Orbegoso and Guyame. In a moment, the quick apprehension of Santa Anna saw that the day was his own. He gave orders to continue the march with all speed to Tacubaya, affecting to listen to the proposals of the commissioners, amusing them without compromising himself, and offering to treat with them at *Mexicalingo*. They returned without having received any decided answer, and without, on their part, having given any assurance that his march should not be stopped ; yet he has been permitted to

arrive unmolested at Tacubaya, where Paredes has also arrived, and where he has been joined by General Valencia; so that the three *pronunciado* Generals are now united there to dispose of the fate of the Republic. . . .

The same day General Almonte had an interview with Santa Anna, who said with a smile, when he left him — “Es buen muchacho — (he is a good lad) he may be of service to us yet.” . . .

The three *Allied Sovereigns* are now in the Archbishop's palace at Tacubaya, from whence they are to dictate to the President and the nation. But they are in fact chiefly occupied with their respective engagements and respective rights. Paredes wishes to fulfil his engagements with the departments of Guanajuato, Jalisco, Zacatecas, Aguas Calientes, Queretaro, &c. In his *Plan* he promised them religious toleration, permission for foreigners to hold property, and so on — the last in fact being his favorite project. Valencia, on his side, has his engagements to fulfil with the federalists, and has proposed Señor Pedraza as an integral part of the regeneration, one whose name will give confidence now and for ever to his party. General Santa Anna has engagements *with himself*. He has determined to command them all, and allows them to fight amongst themselves, provided he governs. Paredes is in fact furious with Valencia, accusing him of having interfered when not wanted, and of having ruined his *Plan*, by mingling it with a revolution, with which it had no concern. He does not reflect, that Valencia was the person who gave the mortal wound to the govern-

ment. Had he not revolted, Santa Anna would not have left Perote, nor Paredes himself have passed on unmolested. . . .

The Conservative Body has been invited to go to Tacubaya, but has refused. The majority desire the election of Paredes, or of any one who is not Santa Anna or Valencia; but Paredes himself, while drawing no very flattering portrait of Santa Anna, declares that he is the only man in the Republic fit for the Presidency; the only man who can make himself obeyed; in short, the only one capable of taking those energetic measures which the safety of the Republic requires. He flatters himself that he, at the head of his division, will always keep Santa Anna in check; as if Cortazar, who deserted Bustamante in a moment of difficulty, could be depended on!

Meanwhile they are fortifying Mexico — and some suppose that Bustamante and his Generals have taken the rash determination of permitting all their enemies to unite, in order to destroy them at one blow.

29th. — There being at present an armistice between the contending parties, a document was published yesterday, fruits of the discussion of the Allied Powers at Tacubaya. It is called "*las bases de Tacubaya*;" and being published in Mexico by General Almonte, many expected and hoped that a new *pronunciamiento* would be the consequence; but it has been quietly received, and the federalists welcome it as containing the foundations of federalism and popularity. There are thirteen articles, which are as follow:

By the first — It is the will of the nation that the supreme powers established by the Constitution of '36 have ceased, excepting the judicial, which will be limited in its functions to matters purely judicial, conformably to the existing laws.

By the second — A *Junta* is to be named, composed of two deputies from each department, elected by his Excellency the Commander-in-chief of the Mexican army, Don Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, in order that they may be entirely free to point out the person who is to hold the executive power, provisionally.

By the third — This person is immediately to assume the executive power, taking an oath in the presence of the Junta, to act for the welfare of the nation.

By the fourth — The provisional executive power shall in two months convoke a new congress, which, with ample powers, shall engage to re-constitute the nation, as appears most suitable to them.

By the fifth — This congress extraordinary shall re-unite in six months after it is convened, and shall solely occupy itself in forming the constitution.

By the sixth — The provisional executive shall answer for its acts, before the first constitutional congress.

By the seventh — The provisional executive shall have all the powers necessary for the organization of all the branches of the public administration.

By the eighth — Four ministers shall be named ; of foreign and home relations ; of public instruction and industry ; of treasury ; and of war and marine.

By the ninth — Each department is to have two trustworthy individuals to form a council, which shall give judgment in all matters on which they may be consulted by the executive.

By the tenth — Till this council is named, the *Junta* will fulfil its functions.

By the eleventh — Till the Republic is organized, the authorities in the departments which have not opposed, and will not oppose the national will, shall continue.

By the twelfth — The General-in-chief and all the other Generals, promise to forget all the political conduct of military men or citizens during the present crisis.

By the thirteenth — When three days have passed after the expiration of the present truce, if the General-in-chief of the government does not adopt these *bases*, their accomplishment will be proceeded with ; and they declare in the name of the nation, that this General and all the troops who follow him, and all the so-called authorities which counteract this national will, shall be held responsible for all the Mexican blood that may be uselessly shed ; and which shall be upon their heads.

30th. — To the astonishment of all parties, Bustamante and his Generals *pronounced* yesterday morning for the federal system, and *this* morning Bustamante has resigned the Presidency. His motives seem not to be understood, unless a circular, published by General Almonte, can throw any light upon them.

“ Without making any commentary,” he says,

speaking of the document of Tacubaya, "upon this impudent document, which proposes to the Mexican nation a military government, and the most ominous of dictatorships in favor of the false Defender of Public Liberty, of the most ferocious enemy of every government that has existed in the country, I hasten to send it to you, that you may have it published in this State, where surely it will excite the same indignation as in an immense majority of the inhabitants of the capital, who, jealous of the national glory, and decided to lose everything in order to preserve it, have spontaneously proclaimed the reëstablishment of the federal system, the whole garrison having followed this impulse. There is no medium between liberty and tyranny; and the government, relying on the good sense of the nation, which will not see with indifference the slavery that is preparing for it, puts itself in the hands of the States, resolved to sacrifice itself on the altars of the country, or to strengthen its liberty forever.

"I enclose the renunciation which His Excellency Don Anastasio Bustamante makes of the Presidency," &c.

3d October. — Though a very democratic crowd collected, and federalism was proclaimed in Mexico, it appears that no confidence in the government was inspired by this last measure. Some say that had Bustamante alone declared for the federal system, and had sent some effective cavalry to protect the pronunciados of that party all through the country, he might have triumphed still. Be that as it may, General Canalizo pronounced for federalism on the

second of October, but this is not followed up on the part of Generals Bustamante and Almonte, while the Vice-President, *Hechavarria*, has retired to his house, blaming Almonte for having published an official document without his knowledge. Everything is in a state of perfect anarchy and confusion. The léperos are going about armed, and no one remains in Mexico but those who are obliged to do so. It is said that in Tacubaya great uneasiness prevailed as to the result of this new movement, and Santa Anna offered an asylum there to the Congress and Conservative Body, although, by the ultimatum from Tacubaya, published on the twenty-eighth, the Constitution of '36 was concluded, and of course these authorities were politically dead. . . .

I had hardly written these words, when the roaring of cannon announced that hostilities have recommenced.

5th. — For the last few days, we have been listening to the cannon, and, even at this distance, the noise, reverberating amongst the hills, is tremendous. The sound is horrible ! There is something appalling, yet humbling, in these manifestations of man's wrath and man's power, when he seems to usurp his Maker's attributes, and to mimic his thunder. The Divine spark kindled within him, has taught him how to draw these metals from the earth's bosom ; how to combine these simple materials, so as to produce with them an effect as terrible as the thunderbolts of heaven. His earthly passions have prompted him so to wield these instruments of destruction, as to deface God's image in his fellow-men. The power is

so divine — the causes that impel him to use that power, are so paltry ! The intellect that creates these messengers of death is so near akin to Divinity — the motives that put them in action are so poor, so degrading even to humanity !

On the third, there was a shower of bombs and shells from the citadel, of which some fell in the palace, and one in our late residence, the mint. An engagement took place in the Viga ; and though Bustamante's party were partially victorious, it is said that neither has much reason to boast of the result. General Espinosa, an old insurgent, arrived at the village last night, and sent to request some horses from the hacienda, which were sent him with all convenient speed, that he might not, according to his usual plan, come and take them. In exchange for some half dozen farm horses in good condition, he sent half a dozen lean, wretched-looking quadrupeds, the bones coming through their skin, skeletons fit for dissection. . . .

News has just arrived to the effect that last night, at three o'clock, Bustamante suddenly left the city, drawing off all his troops from the turrets, and leaving General Orbegoso in the palace, with one hundred men. It was generally reported, that he had marched into the interior, to bring about a federal revolution, but it appears that he has arrived at Guadalupe, and there taken up his quarters. A loud cannonading has been kept up since ten o'clock, which keeps us all idle, looking out for the smoke, and counting the number of discharges.

6th. — A messenger has brought the intelligence

that there had been more noise and smoke than slaughter; the cannons being planted at such distances, that it was impossible they could do much execution. Numerous bulletins are distributed; some violently in favor of Bustamante and federalism, full of abuse and dread of Santa Anna; others lauding that General to the skies, as the saviour of his country. The *allied forces* being in numbers double those of Bustamante, there is little doubt of the result.

7th. — *A capitulation.* Santa Anna is triumphant. He made his solemn entry into Mexico last evening, Generals Valencia and Canalizo being at the head of the united forces. Not a solitary *viva* was heard as they passed along the streets; nor afterwards, during his speech in Congress. Te Deum was sung this morning in the cathedral, the Archbishop in person receiving the new President. We have just returned from Mexico, where we went in search of apartments, and with great difficulty have found rooms in the hotel of the Calle Vergara; but we shall remain here a day or two longer. There is no great difference in the general appearance of the city, except that the shops are all reopened, and that most of the windows are broken. Immediately after the morning ceremony, Santa Anna returned to the Archbishop's palace at Tacubaya, which residence he prefers to the President's palace in Mexico. His return there, after his triumphant entry into the capital, was very much *en Roi* — a retinue of splendid coaches with fine horses, going at full speed; the General's carriage, drawn by four beautiful white horses — (belonging to Don F—— M——; the very same that

were sent to bring us into Mexico) brilliant aids-de-camp, and an immense escort of cavalry. Thus concludes the Revolution of 1842, though not its effects.

The new ministry up to this date, are Señor Gomez Pedraza for Foreign and Home Relations; Castillo, *un petit avocat* from Guadalajara, said to be a furious federalist and Latin scholar, for Public Instruction; General Tornel for War and Marine; and Señor Dufoo for the Treasury. Valencia proposed Paredes for the War Department; but he declined, saying, "No, no, General — I understand you very well. You want to draw me off from my division."

Those who know Bustamante best, even those who most blame him for indecision and want of energy, agree in one point; that the true motives of his conduct are to be found in his constant and earnest desire to spare human life.

LETTER THE FORTY-SIXTH.

Santa Mónica — Solidity — Old paintings — Anachronism — Babies and nurses from the *Cuna* — Society — Funds — Plan — Indian nurses — Carmelite convent — Midnight warning — Old villages and churches — Indian bath — San Matéo — The Lecheria — Fertility — *Molino Viejo* — Dulness — Religious exercises — Return to Mexico — Mexican hotel — New Generals — Disturbances — General Bustamante — Inconvenience — Abuses in the name of Liberty — Verses — Independence celebrated.

8th.

THE Revolution has lasted upwards of thirty-five days, and during that time, though I have written of little else, we have been taking many rides in the environs of this hacienda, some of which were very interesting. We are also making the most of our last few days of Mexican country life. On Thursday we went on horseback with a large party to visit the mill of Santa Mónica, an immense hacienda, which tradition, I know not with what truth, supposes to have been in former days the property of Doña Marina ; a gift to her from Cortes. At all events, at a later period it belonged to the Augustine monks, then to a Mexican family, who lost their fortune from neglect or extravagance. It was bought by the present proprietor for a comparatively trifling sum, and produces him an annual rent of thirty-five thousand dollars upon an average. The house is colossal, and not

more than one-third of it occupied. The granaries, of solid masonry, contain fourteen thousand loads of corn — they were built about two hundred and fifty years ago. From all the neighboring haciendas, and even from many distant estates, the corn is sent to this mill, and is here ground, deposited, and sold on account of the owner, a certain portion deducted for the proprietor of Santa Mónica. It seems strange that they should have no wind-mills here, in a country colonized by Spain, where, according to *Cervantes*, they were common enough. The house is in a commanding situation, and the views of the mountains, especially from the upper windows, are very grand. In some of the old, unoccupied apartments, are some good copies of old paintings, the copies themselves of ancient date. There is the Angel announcing to Elizabeth the birth of Saint John ; a Holy Family, from Murillo ; the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which is one of the best ; particularly the figures in the foreground, of Lot and his family. Lot's wife stands in the distance, a graceful figure just crystallized, her head turned in the direction of the doomed city. I looked into every dark corner, in hopes of finding some old daub representing Doña Marina, but without success. There is the strangest contrast possible between these half-abandoned palaces, and their actual proprietors. We had beautiful riding horses belonging to the hacienda, and enjoyed everything but the exceeding heat of the sun, as we galloped home about one o'clock. . . .

As a specimen of rather a remarkable anachronism, we were told that a justice in the village of Tlana-

pantla, speaking the other day of General Bustamante, said, "Poor man — he is persecuted by all parties, just as Jesus Christ was by the *Jansenists*, the *Sadducees*, and the *Holy Fathers of the Church*!" What a curious *olla podrida* the poor man's brain must be!

In the midst of the revolution, we were amused by a very peaceful sight — all the nurses belonging to the *Cuna*, or Foundling Hospital, coming from the different villages to receive their monthly wages. Amongst the many charitable institutions in Mexico, there appears to me (in spite of the many prejudices existing against such institutions) none more useful than this. These otherwise unfortunate children, the offspring of abject poverty or guilt, are left at the gate of the establishment, where they are received without any questions being asked; and from that moment, they are protected and cared for, by the best and noblest families in the country. The members of the society consist of the first persons in Mexico, male and female. The men furnish the money; the women give their time and attention. There is no fixed number of members, and amongst them are the ladies in whose house we now live. The *President* is the Dowager Marquesa de Vivanco. When the child has been about a month in the *Cuna*, she is sent with an Indian nurse, to one of the villages near Mexico. If sick or feeble, it remains in the house, under the more immediate inspection of the society. These nurses have a *fiadora*, a responsible person, who lives in the village, and answers for their good conduct. Each nurse is paid four dollars per month,

a sufficient sum to induce any poor Indian, with a family, to add one to her stock. Each lady of the society has a certain number under her peculiar care, and gives their clothes, which are poor enough, but according to the *village fashion*. The child thus put out to nurse, is brought back to the *Cuna* when weaned, and remains under the charge of the society for life ; but of the hundreds and tens of hundreds that have passed through their hands, scarcely one has been left to grow up in the *Cuna*. They are constantly adopted by respectable persons, who, according to their inclination or abilities, bring them up either as favored servants, or as their own children ; and the condition of a “ *huerfano*,” an orphan, as a child from the hospital is always called, is perfectly upon a level with that of the most petted child of the house. The nurses in the *Cuna* are paid eight dollars per month.

Upwards of a hundred nurses and babies arrived on Sunday, taking up their station on the grass, under the shade of a large ash tree in the court-yard. The nurses are invariable bronze ; the babies generally dark, though there was a sprinkling of fair English or German faces amongst them, with blue eyes and blonde hair, apparently not the growth of Mexican land. Great attention to cleanliness cannot be hoped for from this class ; but the babies looked healthy and contented. Each nurse had to present a paper which had been given her for that purpose, containing her own name, the name of the child, and that of the lady under whose particular charge she was. Such as — “ *Maria Josefa* — baby *Juanita de los Santos* —

belonging to the *Señora Doña Matilde F*——, given on such a day to the charge of Maria Josefa.” Constantly the nurse had lost this paper, and impossible for her to remember more than her own name; as to who gave her the baby, or when she got it, was entirely beyond her powers of calculation. However, then stepped forward the *fiadora* Doña Tomasa, a sensible-looking village dame, grave and important as became her situation, and gave an account of the nurse and the baby, which being satisfactory, the copper was swept into the nurse’s lap, and she and her baby went away contented. It was pleasant to see the kindness of the ladies to these poor women; how they praised the care that had been taken of the babies; admired the strong and healthy ones, which indeed nearly all were; took an interest in those who looked paler, or less robust; and how fond and proud the nurses were of their charges; and how little of a hired, mercenary, *hospital* feeling existed among them all. . . .

A judge in the village, who comes here frequently, a pleasant and well-informed man, amused us this evening by recounting to us how he had once formed a determination to become a monk, through sudden fear. Being sent by government to Toluca, some years ago, to inquire into the private political conduct of a *Yorkino*, he found that his only means of remaining there unsuspected, and also of obtaining information, was to lodge in the convent of the Carmelite Friars. The padres accommodated him with a cell, and assisted him very efficaciously in his researches. But the first night, being alone in his cell,

the convent large and dreary, and the wind howling lugubriously over the plains, he was awakened at night by a deep, sepulchral voice, apparently close at his ear, tolling forth these words :

“ Hermanos, en el sepulcro acaba,
Todo lo que el mundo alaba ! ”

“ My brothers, all must finish in the tomb !
Of all that men extol, this is the doom.”

Exceedingly startled, he sprang up, and opened the door of his cell. A dim lamp faintly illuminated the long vaulted galleries, and the monks, like shadows, were gliding to midnight prayer. In the dreariness of the night, with the solemn words sounding in his ears like a warning knell, he came to the satisfactory conclusion that all was vanity, and to the determination that the very next day he would retire from the world, join this holy brotherhood, and bind himself to be a Carmelite friar, for life. The day brought counsel, the cheerful sunbeams dispelled the gloom, even within the old convent, and his scruples of conscience melted away.

There are old villages and old churches in this neighborhood that would delight an antiquary. In the churchyard of the village of San Andrés is the most beautiful weeping ash I ever saw. We took shelter from the sun yesterday under its gigantic shadow, and lay there as under a green vault. We saw to-day, near another solitary old church, one of the Indian oven-baths, the *temezcallis*, built of bricks, in which there is neither alteration nor improvement

since their first invention, heaven alone knows in what century.

9th. — We rode last evening to another estate belonging to this family, called *San Mateo*, one of the prettiest places on a small scale we have seen here. The road, or rather path, led us through fields, covered with the greatest profusion of bright yellow sunflowers and scarlet dahlias, so tall that they came up to our horses' ears. The house is built in the cottage style, (the first specimen of that style we have seen here) with a piazza in front, large trees shading it, and a beautiful view from the height on which it stands. It has rather an English than a Spanish look. No one lives there but the agent and his wife — and a fierce dog.

11th. — This morning we rose at five, mounted our horses, and accompanied by Señor E——, together with the administrador and the old gardener, set off to take our last, long ride from San Xavier; for this evening we return to Mexico. The morning was fine and fresh, the very morning for a gallop, and the country looked beautiful. We rode first to the *Lecheria*, where Generals Bustamante and Paredes had their last eventful conference, having passed on our way, various old churches and villages, and another hacienda also belonging to this family; whose estates seem countless. The *Lecheria* is a large unoccupied house; or occupied only by the administrador and his family. It is a fine building, and its court-yard within is filled with flowers; but having neither garden nor trees near it, seems

rather lonely ; and must have been startled to find itself the rendezvous of contending chieftains. It is surrounded by fertile and profitable fields of corn and maize. We staid but a short time in the house, and having observed with due respect the chamber where the generals conferred together, remounted our horses and rode on. I have no doubt, by the way, that their meeting was the most amicable imaginable. I never saw a country where opponent parties bear so little real ill-will to each other. It all seems to evaporate in words. I do not believe that there is any real bad feeling subsisting at this moment, even between the two rival generals, Bustamante and Santa Anna. Santa Anna usurped the Presidency, partly because he wanted it, and partly because if he had not, some one else would ; but I am convinced that if they met by chance in a drawing-room, they would give each other as cordial an *abrazo*, (embrace) Mexican fashion, as if nothing had happened.

Our road led us through a beautiful tract of country, all belonging to the Lecheria, through pathways that skirted the fields, where the plough had newly turned up the richest possible soil, and which were bordered by wild flowers and shady trees. For miles our path lay through a thick *carpeting* of the most beautiful wild flowers imaginable ; bright scarlet dahlias, gaudy sunflowers, together with purple and lilac, and pale straw-colored blossoms, to all which the gardener gave but the general name of *mirasoles*, (sunflowers.) The purple convolvulus threw its creeping branches on the ground, or along

whatever it could embrace ; while all these bright flowers, some growing to a great height, seemed, as we rode by them, to be flaunting past us in their gay colors, like peasants in their holiday dresses. The ground also was enamelled with a little, low, inquisitive-looking blossom, bright yellow, with a peeping brown eye ; and the whole, besides forming the gayest assemblage of colors and groups, gave to the air a delicious fragrance.

But at last we left these fertile grounds, and began to ascend the hills, part of which afford pasture for the flocks, till, still higher up, they become perfectly arid and stony. Here the whole landscape looks bleak and dreary, excepting that the eye can rest upon the distant mountains, of a beautiful blue, like a peep of the promised land from Mount Nebo. After having rode four leagues, the latter part over this sterile ground, affording but an insecure footing for our horses, we descended, low down in a valley, an old sad-looking building, with a ruined mill and some trees. This was the object of our ride ; the "*molino viejo*," (old mill) another hacienda belonging to these rich lady-proprietors ; and profitable on account of the fine pasture which some of the surrounding hills afford. Nothing could look more solitary. Magdalene might have left her desert, and ended her days there, without materially bettering her situation. The only sign of life is a stream that runs round a very productive small orchard in front of the house, while on a hill behind are a few maguey plants, and on the *mirador* in front of the house, some creepers have been trained with a good

deal of taste. There are bleak hills in front — hills with a scanty herbage behind it, and everywhere, a stillness that makes itself felt; while, strange circumstance in this country! there is not even a church, within a league and a half. There has been a chapel in the house, but the gilded paintings are falling from the walls — the altar is broken, and the floor covered with dried corn. The agent's wife, who sits here all alone, must have time to collect her scattered thoughts, and plenty of opportunity for reflection and self-examination. Certain it is, she gave us a very good breakfast, which we attacked like famished pilgrims; and shortly after took our leave.

The heat on the shadeless hills had now become intense. It is only on such occasions that one can fully appreciate the sufferings of *Regulus*. We returned by the *carriage-road*, a track between two hills, composed of ruts and stones, and large holes. On the most barren parts of these hills, there springs a tree which the Indians call *guisachel*; it resembles the savine, and produces a berry of which ink is made. The road was bordered by bushes, covered with white blossoms, very fragrant. We galloped as fast as our horses would carry us, to escape from the sun; and passed a pretty village on the high road, which is a fine broad causeway in good repair, leading to Guanaxuato. We also passed *San Mateo*, and then rode over the fields fast home, where we arrived, looking like broiled potatoes. . . .

We had a conversation with ——— this morning, on the subject of the "*ejercicios*," certain religious

exercises, to which, in Mexico, men as well as women annually devote a certain number of days, during which they retire from the world to a religious house or convent, set apart for that purpose, of which some receive male and others female devotees. Here they fast and pray and receive religious instruction, and meditate upon religious subjects during the period of their retreat. A respectable merchant, who, in compliance with this custom, lately retired for a few days to one of these religious establishments, wrote, on entering there, to his head clerk, a young man to whom he was much attached, informing him that he had a presentiment that he would not leave the convent alive, but would die by the time his devotional exercises were completed; giving him some good advice as to his future conduct, together with his last instructions as to his own affairs. He ended with these words: "*hasta la eternidad!*" until eternity! The letter produced a strong effect on the mind of the young man; but still more, when the merchant died at the end of a few days, as he had predicted, and was carried from the convent to his grave.

MEXICO, Calle Vergara, 12th.

We reached Mexico last evening, and took up our quarters in an inn or hotel kept by an English woman, and tolerably clean, though of course not very agreeable. A number of *pronunciado* officers are also here — amongst others, General —, who I hope will be obliged to go soon, that we may have his parlor; a mysterious English couple; a wounded Colonel, an old gentleman, a fixture in the house, &c.

There is a *table d' hôte*, but I believe no ladies dine there. Invitations to take up our quarters in private houses have been pressed upon us with a kindness and cordiality difficult to resist. . . .

Though politics are the only topic of interest at present, I think you will care little for having an account of the Junta of Representatives, or of the elections, with their chiefly military members. Considering by whom the members are chosen, and the object for which they are elected, the result of their deliberations is, as you may suppose, pretty well known beforehand. Military power is strengthened by every act, and all this power is vested in the commanders in chief. New batches of generals are made, in order to reward the late distinguished services of the officers, and colonels by hundreds. Eleven generals were created in the division of Paredes alone. Money has been given to the troops in the palace, with orders to purchase new uniforms, which it is said will be very brilliant. There appears, generally speaking, a good deal of half-smothered discontent, and it is whispered that even the revolutionary bankers are half repentant and look gloomy. The only opposition paper is "Un Periodico Mas;" one more periodical — the others are all ministerial.

In the south there has been some trouble with Generals Bravo and Alvarez, who wish that part of the country to govern itself until the meeting of congress. There was some talk of putting Valencia at the head of the troops which are destined to march against them, but there are now negotiations pending, and it is supposed there will be some agreement

made without coming to bloodshed. It is said that orders were sent to General Almonte to leave the Republic, and that he answered the despatch with firmness, refusing to acknowledge the authority of Santa Anna. General Bustamante, who is now in Guadalupe, intends to leave the scene of his disasters within a few months. C——n paid him a visit lately, and though scarcely recovered from his fatigues both of body and mind, he appears cheerful and resigned, and with all the tranquillity which can be inspired only by a good conscience, and the conviction of having *done his duty to the best of his abilities*.

As for us personally, this revolution has been the most inconvenient revolution that ever took place ; doing us all manner of mischief ; stopping the sale of our furniture, throwing our affairs into confusion ; overthrowing all our plans, and probably delaying our departure until December or January. But in these cases, every one must suffer more or less ; and meanwhile, we are surrounded by friends and by friendly attentions. It will be impossible for us to leave Mexico without regret. It requires nothing but a settled government to make it one of the first countries in the world. Santa Anna has much in his power. *Reste á savoir* how he will use that power. Perhaps in these last years of tranquillity, which he has spent on his estate, he may have meditated to some purpose.

It is singular how, in trying to avoid small evils, we plunge into unknown gulfs of misery ; and how little we reflect that it might be wiser to

“ Bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.”

Every one has heard of the abuses that produced the first revolution in Mexico — of the great inequality of riches, of the degradation of the Indians, of the high prices of foreign goods, of the Inquisition, of the ignorance of the people, the bad state of the colleges, the difficulty of obtaining justice, the influence of the clergy, and the ignorance in which the Mexican youth were purposely kept. Which of these evils has been remedied? Foreign goods are cheaper, and the Inquisition *is not*; but this last unchristian institution had surely gradually lost its power before the days of the last Viceroy? — But in the sacred name of *Liberty*, every abuse can be tolerated.

“ O fatal name, misleader of mankind,
Phantom, too radiant and too much adored!
Deceitful Star, whose beams are bright to blind,
Although their more benignant influence poured
The light of glory on the Switzer's sword,
And hallowed Washington's immortal name.
Liberty! Thou when absent how deplored,
And when received, how wasted, till thy name
Grows tarnished, shall mankind ne'er cease to work thee
shame?

“ Not from the blood in fiercest battle shed,
Nor deeds heroical as arm can do,
Is the true strength of manly freedom bred,
Restraining tyranny and license too,
The madness of the many and the few.
Land, whose new beauties I behold revealed,
Is this not true, and bitter as 'tis true?
The ruined fane, the desolated field,
The ruffian-haunted road, a solemn answer yield.

“ Where look the loftiest Cordilleras down
From summits hoary with eternal snow
On Montezuma's venerable town
And storied vale, and Lake of Mexico ;
These thoughts the shade of melancholy throw
On all that else were fair, and gay, and grand
As nature in her glory can bestow.
For never yet, though liberal her hand,
So variously hath she adorned, enriched one land.

“ What boots it that from where the level deep
Basks in the tropic sun's o'erpow'ring light
To where yon mountains lift their wintry steep,
All climes, all seasons in one land unite ?
What boots it that her buried caves are bright
With wealth untold of gold or silver ore ?
While checked by anarchy's perpetual blight
Industry trembles 'mid her hard-earned store,
While rapine riots near in riches stained with gore ?

“ O sage regenerators of mankind !
Patriots of nimble tongue and systems crude !
How many regal tyrannies combined,
So many fields of massacre have strewed
As you, and your attendant cut-throat brood ?
Man works no miracles ; long toil, long thought,
Joined to experience, may achieve much good,
But to create new systems out of nought,
Is fit for Him alone, the universe who wrought.

“ But what hath such an hour of such a day
To do with human crimes, or earthly gloom ?
Far wiser to enjoy while yet we may,
The mock-bird's song, the orange flower's perfume,
The freshness that the sparkling fountain showers.
Let nations reach their glory or their doom,
Spring will return to dress yon orange bowers,
And flowers will still bloom on, and bards will sing of
flowers.”

21st. — In pursuance of the last mentioned advice, we have been breakfasting to-day at Tacubaya, with the —— Minister and his family, and enjoying ourselves there in Madame ——'s garden. We have also just returned from the Marquesa de ——'s, where we had a pleasant evening, and met General Paredes, whom I like very much; a real soldier, thin, plain, blunt, and all hacked with wounds.

23d. — C——n has been dining at the —— Minister's, where he met all the great actors in the present drama, and had an agreeable party. We are now thinking of making our escape from this hotel, and of taking a horseback journey into Michoacan, which shall occupy a month or six weeks. Meantime I am visiting, with the Señorita ——, every hospital, jail, college and madhouse in Mexico!

26th. — To-day they are celebrating their independence. All the bells in all the churches, beginning with the cathedral, are pealing — cannon firing — rockets rushing up into the air — Santa Anna in the Alameda, speechifying — troops galloping — little boys running — Te Deum chanting — crowds of men and women jostling each other — the streets covered with carriages, the balconies covered with people — the Paséo expected to be crowded. I have escaped to a quiet room, where I am trying to find time to make up my letters before the packet goes. I conclude this just as the Dictator, with his brilliant staff, has driven off to Tacubaya.

LETTER THE FORTY-SEVENTH.

Opera — Santa Anna and his suite — His appearance — *Belisario* — Solitary “*viva !*” — Brilliant house — Military Dictatorship — *San Juan de Dios* — Hospital *de Jesus* — *Cuna* — Old woman and baby — Different apartments — *Acordada* — Junta — Female prisoners — Chief crime — *Travaux forcés* — Children — Male prisoners — *Forçats* — Soldiers gambling — Chapel — Confessional — Insane hospital — Frenchmen — Different kinds of insanity — Kitchen — Dinner — Insane monk — “Black chamber” — Soldiers — College — Santa Anna’s leg — Projects — All Saints — Señora P——a — Leave-takings.

4th November.

A GREAT *funcion* was given in the Opera in honor of His Excellency. The theatre was most brilliantly illuminated with wax lights. Two principal boxes were thrown into one for the President and his suite, and lined with crimson and gold, with draperies of the same. The staircase leading to the second tier where this box was, was lighted by and *lined* all the way up with rows of footmen in crimson and gold livery. A crowd of gentlemen stood waiting in the lobby for the arrival of the hero of the fête. He came at last in regal state, carriages and outriders at full gallop ; himself, staff and suite, in splendid uniform. As he entered, Señor Roca presented him with a Libretto of the Opera, bound in red and gold. We met the great man *en face*, and he stopped, and

gave us a cordial recognition. Two years have made little change in him in appearance. He retains the same interesting, resigned and rather melancholy expression ; the same quiet voice, and grave but agreeable manner ; and, surrounded by pompous officers, he alone looked quiet, gentlemanly and high bred. The theatre was crowded to suffocation ; boxes, pit and galleries. There was no applause as he entered. One solitary voice in the pit said “ Viva Santa Anna ! ” but it seemed checked by a slight movement of disapprobation, scarcely amounting to a murmur. The opera was *Belisarius*, considered *à propos* to the occasion, and was really beautifully *montée* ; the dresses new and superb — the decorations handsome. They brought in real horses, and *Belisarius* entered in a triumphal chariot, drawn by white steeds ; but for this the stage is infinitely too small, and the horses plunged and pranced so desperately, that *Belisarius* wisely jumped out and finished his *aria* on foot. The two *prima donnas* acted together — the wife and daughter of the hero — both about the same age, and dressed very well. But the *Castellan's* voice is not suited to the opera, and the music, beautiful as it is, was the least effective part of the affair. The generals, in their scarlet and gold uniforms, sat like peacocks surrounding *Santa Anna*, who looked modest and retiring, and as if quite unaccustomed to the public gaze ! The boxes were very brilliant — all the diamonds taken out for the occasion. His Excellency is by no means indifferent to beauty — *tout au contraire* ; yet I dare to say his thoughts were this night of things more warlike and less fair.

Let all this end as it may, let them give everything whatever name is most popular, the government is now a military dictatorship. Señor — calls this revolution “the apotheosis of egotism transformed into virtue ;” and it must be confessed, that in most of the actors, it has been a mere calculation of personal interests.

10th. — We went, some days ago, with our friends from San Xavier, to visit the Hospital of San Juan de Dios, at San Cosmé. We found that, being at present under repair, it has but two occupants, old women — who keep each other melancholy company. The building is very spacious and handsome ; erected, of course, during Spanish dominion, and extremely clean — an observation worthy of note, when it occurs in Mexican public buildings. There is a large hall, divided by square pillars, with a light and cheerful aspect, where the patients sleep ; and a separate apartment for women. The rooms are all so clean, airy, and cheerful, that one forgets it is an hospital. In this respect, the style of building here is superior to all others, with large, airy court-yards and fountains, long galleries and immense apartments, with every window open. There is no part of Europe where, all the year round, invalids can enjoy such advantages ; but, also, there are few parts of Europe where the climate would permit them to do so.

The following day we visited another hospital ; that known as the *Hospital de Jesus* — hallowed ground ; for here the mortal remains of *Cortes* were deposited. And, though rescued from desecration

by a distinguished individual, during a popular tumult, so that they no longer repose in the sanctuary of the chapel, there still exists, enshrined here, that over which time and revolutions have no power — his *memory*.

The establishment, as an hospital, is much finer, and the building infinitely handsomer than the other. The director, a physician, led us first into his own apartments, as the patients were dining, and afterwards showed us through the whole establishment. The first large hall, into which we were shown, is almost entirely occupied by soldiers, who had been wounded during the *pronunciamiento*. One had lost an arm, another a leg, and they looked sad and haggard enough, though they seemed perfectly well attended to, and, I dare say, did anything but *bless* the revolutions that brought them to that state, and with which they had nothing to do ; for your Mexican soldier will lie down on his mat at night, a loyal man, and will waken in the morning and find himself a *pronunciado*. Each one had a separate room, or at least a compartment divided by curtains from the next ; and in each was a bed, a chair, and a small table ; this on one side of the long hall. The other was occupied by excellent hot and cold baths. We then visited the women's apartment, which is on a similar plan. Amongst the patients is an unfortunate child of eight years' old, who in the *pronunciamiento* had been accidentally struck by a bullet, which entered her left temple and came out below the right eye, leaving her alive. The ball was extracted, and a portion of the brain came out at the wound.

She is left blind, or nearly so, having but a faint glimmering of light. They say she will probably ~~live~~, which seems impossible. She looks like a galvanized corpse — yet must have been a good-looking child. Notwithstanding the nature of her wound, her reason has not gone, and as she sat upright in her little bed, with her head bandaged, and her fixed and sightless eyes, she answered meekly and readily to all the questions we put to her. Poor little thing! she was shocking to look at; one of the many innocent beings whose lives are to be rendered sad and joyless by this revolution. The doctor seemed very kind to her.

A curious accident happened to Señor — in this last *pronunciamiento*. He had already lost his leg in the first one; and was limping along the street, when he was struck by a ball. He was able to reach his house, and called to his wife, to tell her what had occurred. Her first impulse was to call for a doctor, when he said to her very coolly, “Not this time, — a carpenter will do better.” He had been shot in his *wooden leg*!

At the end of the women’s apartment in this hospital, there is a small chapel where mass is said to the invalids. It is only remarkable as having over the altar an image of the *Purísima*, brought from Spain by Cortes. We went all through the building, even to the enclosure on the azotea, where dead bodies are dissected; and on which azotea was a quantity of wool, taken from the mattresses of those who die in the hospital, and which is left in the sun during a certain period, before it is permitted to be

used again. The whole establishment struck us as being healthy, cleanly and well-conducted. We then visited the fine old church, which has but one broad aisle with a handsome altar, and near it is the small monument under which the bones of the conqueror were placed. The sacristy of the church is remarkable for its ceiling, composed of the most intricately and beautifully carved mahogany; a work of immense labor and taste, after the Gothic style. The divisions of the compartments are painted blue and ornamented with gilding. In the centre of the apartment is an immense circular table, formed of one piece of mahogany; for which large sums have been refused.

We went in the evening to visit the *Cuna*, which is not a fine building, but a large, healthy, airy house. At the door, where there are a porter and his wife, the babies are now given in. Formerly they were put in at the *reja*, at the window of the porter's lodge; but this had to be given up, in consequence of the tricks played by boys or idle persons, who put in dogs, cats, or dead animals. As we were going up stairs, we heard an old woman singing a cheerful ditty in an awful cracked voice, and as we got a full view of her before she could see us, we saw a clean, old body sitting, sewing and singing, while a baby rolling on the floor in a state of perfect ecstasy, was keeping up a sort of crowing duct with her. She seemed delighted to see these ladies, who belong to the *Junta*, and led us into a large hall where a score of nurses and babies were performing a symphony of singing, hushing, crying, lullabying, and

other nursery music. All along the room were little green painted beds, and both nurses and babies looked clean and healthy. The ——s knew every baby and nurse and directress by name. Some of the babies were remarkably pretty, and when we had admired them sufficiently, we were taken into the next hall, occupied by little girls of two, three, and four years old. They were all seated on little mats at the foot of their small, green beds; a regiment of the finest and healthiest children possible; a directress in the room sewing. At our entrance, they all jumped up simultaneously, and surrounded us with the noisiest expressions of delight. One told me in a confidential whisper, that “Manuelita had thumped her own head, and had a pain in it;” but I could not see that Manuelita seemed to be suffering any acute agonies, for she made more noise than any of them. One little girl sidled up to me, and said in a most insinuating voice, “*Me llevas tu?*” “Will you take me away with you?” — for even at this early age they begin to have a glimmering idea that those whom the ladies choose from amongst them, are peculiarly favored. We staid some time with them, and admired their healthy, happy, and well-fed appearance; and then proceeded to the apartment of the boys; all little things of the same age, sitting ranged in a row like senators in Congress, and, strange to say, much quieter and graver than the female babies; but this must have been from shyness, for before we came away, we saw them romping in great style. The directresses seem good, respectable women, and kind to the children, who, as I

mentioned before, are almost all taken away and brought up by rich people, before they have time to know that there is anything peculiar or unfortunate in their situation. After this adoption, they are completely on a level with the other children of the family — an equal portion is left them, and although their condition is never made a secret of, they frequently marry as well as their adopted brothers and sisters.

Those who are opposed to this institution, are so on the plea that it encourages and facilitates vice. That the number of children in the hospital is a proof that much vice and much poverty do exist, there is no doubt; but that by enabling the vicious to conceal their guilt, or by relieving the poor from their burthen, it encourages either vice or idleness, is scarcely probable. But even were it so, the certain benefits are so immense, when laid in the balance with the possible evils, that they cannot be put in competition. The mother who leaves her child at the *Cuna*, would she not abandon it to a worse fate, if this institution did not exist? If she does so to conceal her disgrace, is it not seen that a woman will stop at no cruelty, to obtain this end? as exposure of her infant, even murder? and that, strong as maternal love is, the dread of the world's scorn has conquered it? If poverty be the cause, surely the misery must be great indeed, which induces the poorest beggar or the most destitute of the Indian women, (whose love for their children amounts to a passion) to part with her child; and though it is suspected that the mother, who has left her infant at the *Cuna*,

has occasionally got herself hired as nurse, that she may have the pleasure of bringing it up, it seems to me that no great evil can arise, even from that.

These orphans are thus rescued from the contamination of vice, from poverty, perhaps from the depths of depravity ; perhaps their very lives are saved, and great sin prevented. Hundreds of innocent children are thus placed under the care of the first and best ladies in the country, and brought up to be worthy members of society.

Another day we devoted to visiting a different and more painful scene — the *Acordada*, or public jail ; a great solid building, spacious and well ventilated. For this also there is a *Junta*, or society of ladies of the first families, who devote themselves to teaching the female malefactors. It is painful, and almost startling, to see the first ladies in Mexico familiarly conversing with and embracing women who have been guilty of the most atrocious crimes ; especially of murdering their husbands ; which is the chief crime of the female prisoners. There are no bad faces amongst them ; and probably not one who has committed a premeditated crime. A moment of jealousy during intoxication, violent passions without any curb, suddenly roused and as suddenly extinguished, have led to these frightful results. We were first shown into a large and tolerably clean apartment, where were the female prisoners who are kept apart as being of more *decent family* than the rest. Some were lying on the floor, others working — some were well dressed, others dirty and slovenly. Few looked sad ; most appeared careless and happy,

and *none* seemed ashamed. Amongst them, were some of the handsomest faces I have seen in Mexico. One good-looking common woman, with a most joyous and benevolent countenance, and lame, came up to salute the ladies. I inquired what she had done. "Murdered her husband, and buried him under the brick floor!" Shade of Lavater! It is some comfort to hear that their husbands were generally such brutes, they deserved little better! Amongst others confined here is the wife, or rather the widow, of a Governor of Mexico, who made away with her husband. We did not see her, and they say she generally keeps out of the way when strangers come. One very pretty and coquettish little woman, with a most intellectual face, and very superior-looking, being in fact a relation of Count ——'s, is in jail on suspicion of having poisoned her lover. A beautiful young creature, extremely like Mrs. ——, of Boston, was among the prisoners. I did not hear what her crime was. We were attended by a woman who has the title of *Presidenta*, and who, after some years of good conduct, has now the charge of her fellow-prisoners — but she also murdered her husband! We went up stairs, accompanied by various of these distinguished criminals, to the room looking down upon the chapel, in which room the ladies give them instruction in reading, and in the christian doctrine. With the time which they devote to these charitable offices, together with their numerous devotional exercises, and the care which their houses and families require, it cannot be said that the

life of a Mexican Señora is an idle one ; nor in such cases can it be considered a useless one.

We then descended to the lower regions, where, in a great, damp, vaulted gallery, hundreds of unfortunate women of the lowest class, were occupied in *travaux forcés* — not indeed of a very hard description. These were employed in baking tortillas for the prisoners. Dirty, ragged, and miserable-looking creatures there were in these dismal vaults, which looked like purgatory, and smelt like — Heaven knows what ! But as I have frequently had occasion to observe in Mexico — the sense of smell is a doubtful blessing. Another large hall near this, which the prisoners were employed in cleaning and sweeping, has at least fresh air, opening on one side into a court, where poor little children, the saddest sight there, were running about — the children of the prisoners.

Leaving the side of the building devoted to the women, we passed on to another gallery, looking down upon an immense paved court with a fountain, where were several hundreds of male prisoners, unfortunately collected together without any reference to the nature of their crime ; the midnight murderer with the purloiner of a pocket-handkerchief ; the branded felon with the man guilty of some political offence ; the debtor with the false coiner ; so that many a young and thoughtless individual whom a trifling fault, the result of ignorance or of unformed principles, has brought hither, must leave this place wholly contaminated and hardened by bad example

and vicious conversation. Here there were indeed some ferocious, hardened-looking ruffians — but there were many mild, good-humored faces ; and I could see neither sadness nor a trace of shame on any countenance ; indeed they all seemed much amused by seeing so many ladies. Some were stretched full-length on the ground, doing nothing ; others were making rolls for hats, of different colored beads, such as they wear here, or little baskets for sale ; whilst others were walking about alone, or conversing in groups. This is the first prison I ever visited, therefore I can compare it with no other ; but the system must be wrong which makes no distinctions between different degrees of crime. These men are the same forçats whom we daily see in chains, watering the Alameda or Paséo, or mending the streets. Several hundreds of prisoners escaped from the Acordada in the time of the Pronunciamiento — probably the worst amongst them — yet *half the city* appears to be here now. We were shown the rows of cells for criminals whom it is necessary to keep in solitary confinement, on account of disorderly behavior — also the apartments of the directors.

In passing down stairs, we came upon a group of dirty-looking soldiers, busily engaged in playing at cards. The alcalde, who was showing us through the jail, dispersed them all in a great rage, which I suspected was partly assumed for our edification. We then went into the chapel, which we had seen from above, and which is handsome and well kept. In the sacristy is a horrid and appropriate image of *the bad thief*. We were also shown a small room off

the chapel, with a confessional, where the criminal condemned to die spends the three days preceding his execution with a padre chosen for that purpose. What horrid confessions, what lamentations and despair that small dark chamber must have witnessed ! There is nothing in it but an altar, a crucifix, and a bench. I think the custom is a very humane one.

We felt glad to leave this palace of crimes, and to return to the fresh air.

The following day we went to visit *San Hipólito*, the insane hospital for men, accompanied by the director, a fine old gentleman, who has been a great deal abroad, and who looks like a French Marquis of the *ancien régime*. I was astonished, on entering, at the sweet and solitary beauty of the large stone courts, with orange trees and pomegranates now in full blossom, and the large fountains of beautifully clear water. There must be something soothing in such a scene to the senses of these most unfortunate of God's creatures. They were sauntering about, quiet and for the most part sad ; some stretched out under the trees, and others gazing on the fountain ; all apparently very much under the control of the administrador, who was formerly a monk, this *San Hipólito* being a dissolved convent of that order. The system of giving occupation to the insane is not yet introduced here.

On entering, we saw rather a distinguished-looking, tall and well-dressed gentleman, whom we concluded to be a stranger who had come to see the establishment, like ourselves. We were therefore somewhat startled when he advanced towards us

with long strides, and in an authoritative voice shouted out, "Do you know who I am? I am the Deliverer of Guatemala!" The *administrador* told us he had just been taken up, was a Frenchman, and in a state of furious excitement. He continued making a tremendous noise, and the other madmen seemed quite ashamed of him. One unhappy-looking creature, with a pale, melancholy face, and his arms stretched out above his head, was embracing a pillar, and when asked what he was doing, replied that he was "making sugar."

We were led into the dining-hall, a long airy apartment, provided with benches and tables, and from thence into a most splendid kitchen, high, vaulted, and receiving air from above; a kitchen that might have graced the castle of some feudal baron, and looked as if it would most surely last as long as men shall eat and cooks endure. Monks of San Hipólito! how many a smoking dinner, what viands steaming and savory must have issued from this noblest of kitchens to your refectory next door.

The food for the present inmates, which two women were preparing, consisted of meat and vegetables, soup and sweet things; excellent meat, and well-dressed *frijoles*. A poor little boy, imbecile, deaf and dumb, was seated there cross-legged, in a sort of wooden box; a pretty child, with a fine color, but who has been in this state from his infancy. The women seemed very kind to him, and he had a placid, contented expression of face; but took no notice of us when we spoke to him. Strange and unsolvable problem, what ideas pass through the brain of that child!

When we returned to the dining hall, the inmates of the asylum, to the number of ninety or a hundred, were all sitting at dinner, ranged quietly on the benches, eating with wooden spoons out of wooden bowls. The poor hero of Guatemala was seated at the lower end of the table, tolerably tranquil. He started up on seeing us, and was beginning some furious exclamations, but was prevented by his neighbor, who turned round with an air of great superiority, saying, "He's *mad*!" at which the other smiled with an air of great contempt, and looking at us, said, "He calls *me* mad!" The man of the pillar was eyeing his soup, with his arms as before, extended above his head. The director desired him to eat his soup, upon which he slowly and reluctantly brought down one arm, and eat a few spoonfuls. "How much sugar have you made to-day?" asked the director. "Fifty thousand kingdoms!" said the man.

They showed us two men, of very good family, and one old gentleman who did not come to dinner with the rest, but stood aloof, in the court-yard, with an air of great superiority. He had a cross upon his breast, and belongs to an old family. As we approached, he took off his hat, and spoke to us very politely; then turning to the director, "*Y por fin*," said he, "*Cuando saldré?*" "When shall I leave this place?" "Very soon," said the director. "You may get your trunks ready." He bowed and appeared satisfied, but continued standing in the same place, his arms folded, and with the same wistful gaze as before. The director told us that the two great

causes of madness here, are love and drinking ; (mental and physical intoxication) that the insanity caused by the former is almost invariably incurable, whereas the victims of the latter generally recover, as is natural. The poor old gentleman with the cross, owes the overthrow of his mind to the desertion of his mistress. We saw the chapel, where a padre says mass to these poor creatures, " the Innocents," as they are called here. They do not enter the chapel, for fear of their creating any disturbance, but kneel outside, in front of the iron grating, and the administrador says it is astonishing how quiet and serious they appear during divine service.

As we passed through the court, there was a man busily employed in hanging up various articles of little children's clothes, as if to dry them — little frocks and trowsers ; all the time speaking rapidly to himself, and stopping every two minutes to take an immense draught of water from the fountain. His dinner was brought out to him, (for he could not be prevailed on to sit down with the others) and he eat it in the same hurried way, dipping his bread in the fountain, and talking all the time. The poor madman of the *sugar-kingdoms* returned from dinner, and resumed his usual place at the pillar, standing with his arms above his head, and with the same melancholy and suffering expression of face.

The director then showed us the room where the clothes are kept ; the straw hats and coarse dresses, and the terrible straight waistcoats made of brown linen, that look like coats with prodigiously long sleeves, and the *Botica* where the medicines are kept,

and the Secretary's room where they preserve the mournful records of entry and death — though often of exit. All round the court are strong stone cells, where the furious are confined. He took us into an empty one, where a Franciscan friar had been lodged. He had contrived to pull down part of the wall, and to make a large hole into his neighbor's cell adjoining. Fancy one madman seeing the head of another appear through a hole in his cell ! The whole cell was covered with crosses of every dimension, drawn with a piece of coal. They had been obliged to remove him into another in the gallery above, where he had already begun a new work of destruction. I was afterwards told by the Padre P——n, the confessor of condemned criminals, and who is of the same order as this insane monk, that this poor man had been a merchant, and had collected together about forty thousand dollars, with which he was travelling to Mexico, when he was attacked by robbers, who not only deprived him of all he possessed, but gave him some severe wounds on the head. When somewhat recovered, he renounced the world, and took his vows in the convent of San Francisco. Shortly after, he became subject to attacks of insanity, and at last became so furious, that the superior was obliged to request an order for his admission to San Hipólito.

The director then led us to the gallery above, where are more cells, and the terrible "*Cuarto Negro*," the Black Chamber ; a dark, round cell, about twelve feet in circumference, with merely a slit in the wall for the admission of air. The floor is thickly covered

with straw and the walls are entirely covered with soft stuffed cushions. Here the most furious madman is confined on his arrival, and whether he throws himself on the floor, or dashes his head against the wall, he can do himself no injury. In a few days, the silence and the darkness soothe his fury, he grows calmer, and will eat the food that is thrust through the aperture in the wall. From this he is removed to a common cell, with more light and air ; but until he has become tranquil, he is not admitted into the court amongst the others.

From this horrible, though I suppose necessary den of suffering, we went to the apartments of the administrador, which have a fine view of the city and the volcanoes ; and saw a virgin, beautifully carved in wood, and dressed in white satin robes, embroidered with small diamonds. On the ground was a little dog, dying, having just fallen off from the azotea, an accident which happens to dogs here not unfrequently. We then went up to the azotea, which looks into the garden of San Fernando and of our last house, and also into the barracks of the soldiers, who, as ——— observed, are more dangerous madmen than those who are confined. Some rolled up in their dirty yellow cloaks, and others standing in their shirt-sleeves, and many without either ; they were as dirty looking a set of military heroes as one would wish to see. When we came down stairs again, and had gone through the court, and were passing the last cell, each of which is only lighted by an aperture in the thick stone wall, a pair of great, black eyes glaring through, upon a level with mine, startled

me infinitely. The eyes however glared upon vacancy. The face was thin and sallow, the beard long and matted, and the cheeks sunken. What long years of suffering appeared to have passed over that furrowed brow ! I wish I had not seen it. . . .

We afterwards went to the college of Bizcainos, that K—— might see it — my third and last visit. What a palace ! What courts and fountains ! — We went over the whole building as before, from the azotea downwards, and from the porter's lodge upwards. Many of the scholars who went out during the revolution, have not yet returned. K—— was in admiration at the galleries, which look like long vaulted streets, and at the chapel, which is certainly remarkably rich. . . .

Having stopt in the carriage on the way home, at a shoemaker's, we saw *Santa Anna's leg* lying on the counter, and observed it with due respect, as the prop of a hero. With this leg, which is fitted with a very handsome boot, he reviews his troops next Sunday, putting his *best foot foremost* ; for generally he merely wears an unadorned wooden leg. The shoemaker, a Spaniard, whom I can recommend to all customers as the most impertinent individual I ever encountered, was arguing in a blustering manner, with a gentleman who had brought a message from the General, desiring some alteration in the boot ; and wound up by muttering, as the messenger left the shop, "He shall either wear it as it is, or review the troops next Sunday without his leg !" ¹

¹ BOSTON, November, 1842. — *Apropos des bottes*. I copy the following paragraph from an Havana newspaper :

"MEXICO, 2th September. — Yesterday, was buried with pomp

We have ordered *mangas* to wear in our intended journey, which is now nearly decided on — nothing tolerable to be had under seventy or eighty dollars. They are made of strong cloth, with a hole in the middle for putting the head through, with black velvet capes, fringed either with silk or gold, and are universally lined with strong calico. They are warm and convenient for riding in the country. I have seen some richly embroidered, which cost five hundred dollars.

It is as I prophesied — now that we are about leaving Mexico, we fancy that there still remain objects of interest which we have not seen. We have paid a visit, probably a last visit, to Our Lady of Guadalupe, and certainly never examined her cathedral with so much attention, or lingered so long before each painting and shrine, or listened with so much interest to the particulars of its erection, which were given us by Señor —, whose authority in these matters is unimpeachable.

It appears that the present sacristy of the parochial church dates back to 1575, and was then a small chapel, where the miraculous image was kept, and where it remained until the beginning of the next century, when a new church was built, to which the image was solemnly transported. Even when enclosed in the first small sanctuary, its fame must have

and solemnity, in the cemetery of Saint Paul, the foot which his Excellency, President Santa Anna, lost in the action of the 5th December, 1838. It was deposited in a monument erected for that purpose, Don Ignacio Sierra y Roso having pronounced a funeral discourse appropriate to the subject."

been great, for, by orders of the Archbishop, six doweries of three hundred dollars each, to be given to six orphans on their marriage, were annually drawn from the alms offered at her shrine. But in 1629 Mexico suffered the terrible inundation which destroyed so large a part of the city, and the excellent Archbishop, D. Francisco Manzo, while devoting his time and fortune to assist the sufferers, also gave orders that the Virgin of Guadalupe should be brought into Mexico, and placed in the cathedral there, then of very different dimensions from the present noble building, occupying, it is said, the space which is now covered by the principal sacristy. When the waters retired, and the Virgin was restored to her own sanctuary, her fame increased to a prodigious extent. Copies of the Divine Image were so multiplied, that there is probably not an Indian hut throughout the whole country where one does not exist. Oblations and alms increased a thousand fold; a silver throne, weighing upwards of three hundred and fifty marks, and beautifully wrought, chiefly at the expense of the Viceroy, Count of Salvatierra, was presented to her sanctuary, together with a glass case, (for the image) considered at that time a wonder of art. At the end of the century a new temple, the present sanctuary, was begun; the second church was thrown down, but not until a provisional building (the actual parish church) was erected to receive the image. The new temple was concluded in 1709, and is said to have cost from six to eight hundred thousand dollars, collected from *alms alone*; which were solicited in person by the

Viceregal Archbishop D. Juan de Ortega y Montañez. Two private individuals in Mexico gave, the one thirty, the other fifty thousand dollars, towards its erection.

The interior is of the Doric order, and has three aisles, divided by eight pillars, upon which with the walls are placed eighteen arches, the centre one forming the dome of the edifice. It runs from north to south, has three great gates, one fronting Mexico, and two others at the sides. Its length may be two hundred and fifty feet, and its width about one hundred and thirty. In the four external angles of the church are four lofty towers, in the midst of which rises the dome. Three altars were at first erected, and in the middle one, destined for the image, was a sumptuous tabernacle of silver gilt, in which were more than three thousand two hundred marks of silver, and which cost nearly eighty thousand dollars. In the centre of this was a piece of gold, weighing four thousand and fifty *castellanos*, (an old Spanish coin, the fiftieth part of a mark of gold,) and here the image was placed, the linen on which it is painted guarded by a silver plate of great value. The rest of the temple had riches corresponding. The candlesticks, vases, railing, &c., contain nearly fourteen thousand marks of silver, without counting the numerous holy vessels, cups and chalices, adorned with jewels. One golden lamp weighed upwards of two thousand two hundred *castellanos* — another seven hundred and fifty silver marks.

In 1802, some part of the walls and arches began to give way — and it was necessary to repair them.

But first, under the direction of the celebrated sculptor Tolsa, a new altar was erected for the image. His first care was to collect the most beautiful marbles of the country for this purpose — the black he brought from Puebla, and the white, gray and rose-colored from the quarries of San José Vizarron. He also began to work at the bronze ornaments, but from the immense sums of money necessary to its execution, the work was delayed for nearly twenty years. Then, in 1826, it was recommenced with fresh vigor. The image was removed, meanwhile, to the neighboring convent of the Capuchinas, and the same year the altar was concluded, and the Virgin brought back in solemn procession, in the midst of an innumerable multitude. This great altar, which cost from three to four hundred thousand dollars, is a concave hexagonal, in the midst of which rise two white marble pillars, and on each side two columns of rose-colored marble, of the composite order, which support the arch. Between these are two pedestals, on which are the images of San Joaquin, and Santa Anna, and two niches, containing San José and St. John the Baptist. Above the cornices are three other pedestals, supporting the three Saints, Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael; and above St. Michael, in the midst of cherub and seraphim, is a representation of the Eternal Father. The space between the upper part of the Altar and the roof, is covered with a painted crimson curtain, held by saints and angels. The tabernacle, in the centre of the altar, is of rose-colored marble, in

which the image is deposited, and all the ornaments of the altar are of gilt bronze and zinc.

Besides the Collegiate and the Parish Church, there are at Guadalupe the Church of the Capuchin Nuns, and the Churches of the Hill and the Well; all in such close conjunction, that the whole village or city, as it calls itself, seems altogether some religious establishment or confraternity, belonging to these temples and churches, united in the worship of the Virgin, and consequent upon the "Miraculous Apparition" manifested to the chosen Indian, Juan Diego.

I regret not having known till lately, that there exists in Mexico a convent of *Indian Nuns*; and that each nun, when she takes the veil, wears a very superb Indian dress — the costume formerly worn by the *cacicas*, or ladies of highest rank.

I went some days ago with the Señorita F——a to visit the house for insane women, in the *Calle de Canoa*, built in 1698, by the rich congregation of *el Salvador*. The institution is now in great want of funds; and is by no means to be compared with the establishment of San Hipólito. The directress seems a good, kind-hearted woman, who devotes herself to doing her duty, and who is very gentle to her patients; using no means but those of kindness and steadiness to subdue their violence. But what a life of fear and suffering such a situation must be! The inmates look poor and miserable, generally speaking, and it is difficult to shake off the melancholy impression which they produce on the mind. We were particularly struck by the sight of one un-

fortunate woman of the better class, who, with her long hair all dishevelled, and eyes sparkling with a wild light, stood at the open window of her cell, where for the present they are obliged to confine her, and who poured forth the most piteous lamentations, and adjured every one who passed, in the most pathetic terms, to restore her husband and children to her. One girl was singing cheerfully — one or two women were sewing, but most of them were sitting crouched on the floor, with a look of melancholy vacancy. The poor are admitted gratis, and the richer classes pay a moderate sum for their board.

To turn to a very different theme. We continue to go to the opera, certainly the most agreeable amusement in Mexico, and generally to the — Minister's box, in the centre. Last evening, *Belisario* was repeated, but with less splendor than on its representation in honor of Santa Anna.

We expect to leave this on the sixteenth, going in a diligence as far as Toluca, where a Mexican officer, Colonel Y——, has kindly promised to meet us with mules and horses. M. le Comte de B—— and Mr. W——, Secretaries of the French and English Legations, have made arrangements for accompanying us as far as Valladolid ; with which agreeable travelling companions we may reasonably expect a pleasant journey.

Last Sunday was the Festival of All Saints ; on the evening of which day, we walked out under the *portales*, with M. and Madame de ——, —— Minister and his wife, to look at the illumination, and

at the numerous booths filled with *sugar-skulls*, &c. ; temptingly ranged in grinning rows, to the great edification of the children. In general, there are crowds of well dressed people on the occasion of this fête, but the evening was cold and disagreeable, and though there were a number of ladies, they were enveloped in shawls, and dispersed early. The old women at their booths, with their cracked voices, kept up the constant cry of “ skulls, *niñas*, skulls ! ” — but there were also animals done in sugar, of every species, enough to form specimens for a Noah’s ark.

14th. — We leave this the day after to-morrow, and shall write from our first halting place ; and as on our return, we shall do little more than pass through Mexico, we are *almost* taking leave of all our friends. Were I to tell you all the kindness and hospitality, and cordial offers of service that we receive, and the manner in which our rooms (albeit the rooms of an inn) are filled from morning till night, it would seem an exaggeration. One acquaintance we have made lately, whom we like so much, that we have been vociferously abusing the system of *faire part* in this city, since, owing to the mistake of a servant, we have until now been deprived of the pleasure of knowing her. The mistake is rectified at the eleventh hour. The lady is the Señora de G——z P——a, one of the most accomplished and well-informed women in Mexico ; and though our friendship has been short, I trust it may be enduring.

Two evenings since, we went with the Señora de

C——s to an amateur concert; and I question whether in any capital of Europe, so many good amateur voices could be collected. I do not speak of the science or cultivation, though the hostess, the Señora A—— has a perfect method. But yesterday we spent a most agreeable evening in a delightful family reunion, at the house of Señor N——i del B——o. It was strictly limited to the family relations, and was, I believe, his *jour de fête*. If all Mexican society resembled this, we should have too much regret in leaving it. The girls handsome, well educated, and simple in their manners and tastes — the Countess a model of virtue and dignity. Then so much true affection and love of home amongst them all! So much wealth and yet good taste and perfect simplicity visible in all that surrounds them! Mexico is not *lost* as long as such families exist, and though they mingle little in society, the influence of their virtues and charities is widely felt.

This morning C——n had an audience of the new President. He also paid a visit to General Bustamante, who is still at Guadalupe, and preparing for his departure. He will probably sail in the Jason, the man-of-war which brought us to Vera Cruz, and it is probable that we shall leave the Republic at the same period. The Dowager Marquesa de Vivanco, who in consequence of ill health has not left her house for months, was among our visitors this morning.

To-day Count C——a dined here, and brought for our inspection the splendid sword presented by Congress to General Valencia, with its hilt of brilliants

and opals ; a beautiful piece of workmanship, which does credit to the Mexican artificers. He was particularly brilliant and eloquent in his conversation to-day — whether his theories are right or wrong, they are certainly *entrainant*.

Our next letters will probably be dated from Toluca.

LETTER THE FORTY-EIGHTH.

Leave Mexico — Diligence — Indian padre — Brandy-drinking female — Bad roads — Beautiful view — Escort — Good breakfast — Crosses — Robber's head — Select party — Lerma — Valley of Toluca — Hacienda — Toluca — Count de B—— and Mr. W—— The comandante — Gay supper — Colonel Y—— Day at Toluca — Journey to *La Gabia* — Heat and hunger — Pleasant quarters — Princely estate — El Pilar — A zorillo — A wolf — Long journey — Tortillas — Count de B—— State of Michoacan — Forest scenery — *Trojes of Anganguero* — Comfort.

TOLUCA, 16th.

IN vain would be a description with the hopes of bringing them before you, of our last few days in Mexico ! Of the confusion, the bustle, the visits, the paying of bills, the packing of trunks, the sending off of heavy luggage to Vera Cruz, and extracting the necessary articles for our journey ; especially yesterday, when we were surrounded by visitors and *cargadores*, from half past seven in the morning, till half past eleven at night. Our very last visitors were the families of C——a and E——n. The new President, *on dit* is turning his sword into a ploughshare. Preferring a country to a city life, nearly every Sunday he names the house in which he desires to be *fêted* the following week — now at the villa of Señor —— at Tacubaya — now at the hacienda of Señor —— at San Agustin. As yet the diplomatic corps do not

attend these assemblies, not having been officially received; but we hear that there is singing and dancing, and other amusements, and that His Excellency is extremely amiable and *galant*.

By six o'clock this morning, several of our friends were assembled to accompany us to the diligence; (Señors C——o, M——e, R——s, A——e, &c.) which, unfortunately, we had not been able to secure for ourselves; for at this moment, the whole world is in motion, going to attend the great annual fair of San Juan de los Lagos; which begins on the fifth of December, and to which Toluca is the direct road. Fortunately, the diligence had broken down the preceding evening, and it was necessary to repair it; otherwise we should have left behind various important articles, for in the confusion of our departure, every one had left some requisite item at the hotel — C——n his gun; K—— her bag; I *everything* — and more especially the book with which I intended to beguile the weary hours between Mexico and Toluca. Our servant-boy ran — Señor R——s mounted his horse, and most good-naturedly galloped between the diligence office and the hotel, until, little by little, all the missing articles were restored. We climbed into the coach, which was so crowded that we could but just turn our heads to groan an adieu to our friends. The coach rattled off through the streets, dashed through the Alameda, and gradually we began to shake down, and by a little arrangement of cloaks and sarapes, to be less crowded. A *padre* with a very Indian complexion sat between K—— and me, and a horrible, long, lean, bird-like female,

with immense red goggle eyes, coal black teeth, fingers like claws, a great goitre, and drinking brandy at intervals, sat opposite to us. There were also various men buried in their sarapes. Satisfied with a cursory inspection of our companions, I addressed myself to *Blackwood's Magazine*, but the road which leads towards the Desierto, and which we before passed on horseback, is dreadful, and the mules could scarcely drag the loaded coach up the steep hills. We were thrown into ruts, horribly jolted, and sometimes obliged to get out, which would not have been disagreeable but for the necessity of getting in again. The day and the country were beautiful, but impossible to enjoy either in a shut coach. We were rather thankful when the wheels sticking in a deep rut, we were forced to descend, and walk forwards for some time. We had before seen the view from these heights, but the effect never was more striking than at this moment. The old city with her towers, lakes and volcanoes, lay bathed in the bright sunshine. Not a cloud was in the sky — not an exhalation rose from the lake — not a shadow was on the mountains. All was bright and glittering, and flooded in the morning light; while in contrast rose to the left the dark, pine-covered crags, behind which the Desierto lies.

At Santa Fé we changed horses, and found there an escort which had been ordered for us by General Tornel; a necessary precaution in these robber-haunted roads. We stopped to breakfast at *Quajimalpa*, where the inn is kept by a Frenchman, who is said to be making a large fortune, which he deserves

for the good breakfast he had prepared for us by orders of the Count de B—— and Mr. W——, who had preceded us early in the morning on horseback ; (enviable fate !) We had white fish from the river of Lerma, which crosses the plains of Toluca, fresh and well dressed, and without that taste of *mud* which those from the Mexican Laguna occasionally have ; also hot cutlets, potatoes, coffee, &c.

After leaving this inn, situated in a country formed of heaps of lava and volcanic rocks, the landscape becomes more beautiful and wooded. It is, however, dangerous, on account of the shelter which the wooded mountains afford to the knights of the road, and to whose predilection for these wild solitudes, the number of crosses bore witness. In a woody defile, there is a small clear space called "*Las Cruces*," where several wooden crosses point out the site of the famous battle between the curate Hidalgo and the Spanish General Truxillo. An object really in keeping with the wild scenery, was the head of the celebrated robber *Maldonado*, nailed to the pine tree beneath which he committed his last murder. It is now quite black, and grins there, a warning to his comrades and an encouragement to travellers. From the age of ten to that of fifty, he followed the honorable profession of free-trader, when he expiated his crimes. The padre who was in the coach with us, told us that he heard his last confession. That grinning skull was once the head of a man, and an ugly one too, they say ; but stranger still it is to think, that that man was once a baby, and sat on his mother's knee, and that his mother may have been

pleased to see him cut his *first tooth*. If she could but see his teeth now ! Under this very head, and as if to show their contempt for law and justice, the robbers lately eased some travellers of their luggage. Those who were robbed, however, were false coiners, rather a common class in Toluca, and two of these ingenious gentlemen were in the coach with us, (as we afterwards learnt) and were returning to that city. These, with the brandy-drinking female, composed our select little party !

The scenery without, was decidedly preferable to that within, and the leathern sides of the vehicle being rolled up, we had a tolerable view. What hills covered with noble pines ! What beautiful pasture-fields, dotted with clumps of trees, that looked as if disposed for effect, as in an English park ! — firs, oaks, cedars and elms. Arrived at the town or village of Lerma, famous for its manufacture of spurs, and standing in a marshy country at the entrance of the valley of Toluca, all danger of the robbers is passed, and with the danger, much of the beauty of the scenery. But we breathed more freely on another account, for here she of the goggle-eyes and goitre, descended with her brandy-bottle, relieving us from the oppressive influence of the sort of *day-mare*, if there be such a thing, which her presence had been to us.

The valley of Toluca was now before us, its volcano towering in the distance. The plains around looked cold and dreary, with pools of transparent water, and swamps filled with various species of water-fowl. The hacienda of San Nicolas, the property of Señor Mier y Teran, a Spaniard, was the

only object that we saw worthy of notice, before we reached Toluca. This hacienda, formerly the property of the Carmelite monks, is a valuable estate. Not a tree is to be seen here, or in the valley, a great extent of which is included in it; but it is surrounded by vast fields of maguery and maize; it is traversed by a fine river, and is one of the most profitable estates in the country. The laborers here are in general the Ottomie Indians, a poor and degraded tribe. Here we dismissed our escort, which had been changed every six leagues, and entered Toluca about four o'clock, passing the *Garrita* without the troublesome operation of searching, to which travellers in general are subject. We found tolerable rooms in an inn; at least there were two or three wooden chairs in each, and a deal table in one; and Mr. W—— and the Count de B—— looking out for us. Colonel Y—— had not yet made his appearance.

Toluca, a large and important city, lies at the foot of the mountain of San Miguel de *Tutucuitlalpico*; and is an old, quiet, good-looking, respectable-seeming place, about as sad and solitary as Puebla. The streets, the square, and the churches are clean and handsome. To the south of the city lie extensive plains covered with rich crops; and about ten miles in the same direction is the volcano. We walked out in the afternoon to the Alameda, passing under the *portales*; handsomer and cleaner than those of Mexico; and sate down on a stone bench beside a fountain, a position which commanded a beautiful view of the distant hills and of the volcano, behind which the sun was setting in a sea of liquid flame,

making it look like a great pearl lying amongst melted rubies. The Alameda has not been much ornamented, and is quite untenanted ; but walks are cut through the grass, and they were making hay. Everything looked quiet and convent-like, and a fine fresh air passed over the new-mown grass, inclining to cold, but pleasant. The volcano is scooped out into a natural basin, containing, in the very midst of its fiery furnace, two lakes of the purest, coldest and most transparent water. It is said that the view from its summit, the ascent to which is very fatiguing, but has been accomplished, is beautiful and extensive. On the largest lake travellers have embarked in a canoc, but I believe it has never been crossed, on account of the vulgar prejudice that it is unfathomable, and has a whirlpool in the centre. The volcano is about fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, and nine thousand above Toluca. It is not so grand as Popocatepetl, but a *respectable* volcano for a country town — “ *muy decente*,” (very decent) as a man said in talking of the pyramids that adorn the wonderful cavern of Cucahuamilpa.

We ordered supper at the inn, and were joined by the *Comandante* of Toluca, Don M—— A——, the officer who came out to meet us when we arrived in Mexico. I regret to state that such a distinguished party should have sat down, six in number, to fowl and frijoles, with only three knives and two forks between them. The provident travellers had, however, brought good wine ; and if our supper was not very elegant, it was at least very gay. Colonel Y—— arrived about ten o'clock ; but it is agreed

that the animals require one day's rest, and we shall consequently spend tomorrow at Toluca.

17th.—We have spent this day in arranging our route, in which we are guided not by the most direct, but the most agreeable ; in walking through the city, which in the time of federalism, was the capital of the state, in climbing some of the steep roads cut through the hills at whose base it lies ; and in admiring the churches and convents, and broad, well-paved streets with their handsome houses, painted white and red. It is decided that the first night of our pilgrimage, we shall request hospitality at the hacienda of the Ex-Minister Hechavarria — *La Gabia*, which is about ten leagues of very bad road from Toluca — which is sixteen from Mexico. All these important arrangements being made, and a sketch of our journey traced out, we are about retiring to rest, in the agreeable prospect of not entering any four or two-wheeled vehicle, be it cart, carriage, coach or diligence, till we return here.

LA GABIA, 19th.

To get *under weigh* the first morning was a work of some difficulty. Mules to be loaded, horses to be fitted with saddles ; and one mule lame, and another to be procured, and the trunks found to be too heavy, and so on. We rose at five, dressed by candlelight, took chocolate, put on our mangas, and then planted ourselves in the passage looking down upon the *patio*, to watch the proceedings and preparations. Colonel A—— arrived at seven with a trooper, to accompany us part of the way ; and we set off while

it was cool, without waiting for the rest of the party. Toluca looked silent and dignified as we passed through the streets — with its old convents and dark hills. The road, after leaving the city, was stony and mountainous; and having reached a small *rancho* with an old oratorio beside it, we halted to wait for our travelling companions. Colonel A—— amused us with an account of his warfare against the Comanches, in which service he has been terribly wounded. Singular contrast between these ferocious barbarians and the mild Indians of the interior! He considers them an exceedingly handsome, fine-looking race; whose resources, both for war and trade, are so great, that were it not for their natural indolence, the difficulties of checking their aggressions would be formidable indeed. Colonel A—— being obliged to return to Toluca, left us in charge of his trooper, and we waited at the rancho for about half an hour, when our party appeared, with a long train of mules and *mozos*; the gentlemen dressed Mexican fashion as well as their men; the best dress in the world for a long equestrian journey. Colonel Y—— had staid behind to procure another mule, and there being two roads, we, as generally happens in these cases, chose the worst; which led us for leagues over a hilly country, unenlivened by tree, shrub, bush or flower. The sun was already high, and the day intensely hot. We passed an occasional poor but — a chance Indian passed us — showed his white teeth, and in spite of the load on his back, contrived to draw his hat off his matted locks, and give us a mild good-morrow — but for the

rest, from Dan to Beersheba, from Toluca to La Gabia, all was barren. By twelve o'clock, we might have fancied ourselves passing over the burning plains of Mesopotamia, notwithstanding an occasional cold breeze which swept across us for a moment, serving only to make us feel the heat with greater force. Then barranca followed barranca. The horses climbed up one crag, and slid down another. By two o'clock we were all starving with hunger, but nothing was to be had. Even Nebuchadnezzar would have found himself at a nonplus. The Count de B—— contrived to buy some graniditas and parched corn from an Indian, which kept us quiet for a little while; and we tried to console ourselves by listening to our arrieros, who struck up some wild songs in chorus, as they drove the wearied mules up the burning hills. Every Indian that we met, assured us that La Gabia was "*cerquita*," quite near — "*detrás lomita*," behind the little hill; and every little hill that we passed presented to our view another little hill, but no signs of the much wished-for dwelling. A more barren, treeless and uninteresting country than this road (on which we have unanimously revenged ourselves by giving it the name of "the road of the three hundred barrancas,") led us through, I never beheld. However, "it's a long lane that has no turning," as we say in Scotland; and between three and four, La Gabia was actually in sight; a long, low building, whose entrance appeared to us the very gates of Eden. We were all, but especially me, who had ridden with my veil up, from a curiosity to see where my horse was going, burnt to the color of Pawnee Indians.

We were most cordially welcomed by Señor Hechavarria and his brothers-in-law, and soon refreshed by rest and an excellent dinner. Fortunately, K—— and I had no mirrors, but each gave such a flattering description of the other's countenance, that it was quite graphic.

This beautiful hacienda, which formerly belonged to the Count de Regla, whose possessions must have been royal, is thirty leagues in length and seventeen in width ; containing in this great space the productions of every climate, from the fir-clad mountains on a level with the volcano of Toluca, to the fertile plains which produce corn and maize ; and lower down, to fields of sugar cane and other productions of the tropics.

We retired to rest betimes, and early this morning rode out with these gentlemen, about five leagues through the hacienda. The morning was bright and exhilarating, and our animals being tired, we had fresh, strong little horses belonging to their stud, which carried us delightfully. We rode through beautiful pine woods and beside running water, contrasting agreeably with our yesterday's journey, and were accompanied by three handsome little boys, children of the family, the finest and manliest little fellows I ever saw, who, dressed in a complete Mexican costume, like three miniature rancheros, rode boldly and fearlessly over everything. There was a great deal of firing at crows and at the wild duck on a beautiful little lake, but I did not observe that any one was burthened with too much game. We got off our horses to climb through the wooded hills and

ravines, and passed some hours lying under the pine trees, listening to the gurgling of the little brook, whose bright waters make music in the solitude, and like the soldiers at the *pronunciamiento*, but with surer aim, pelting each other from behind the parapets of the tall trees, with fir tops. About ten o'clock, we returned to breakfast—and Colonel Y—— having arrived, we are now preparing to continue our journey this afternoon.

ANGANGUEO, 20th.

We left La Gabia at four o'clock, accompanied by our hospitable hosts for some leagues, all their own princely property; through great pasture fields, woods of fir and oak, hills clothed with trees, and fine clear streams. We also passed a valuable stone quarry; and were shown a hill belonging to the Indians, presented to them by a former proprietor. We formed a long train, and I pitied the mistress of *El Pilar*, our next halting-place, upon whom such a regiment was about to be unexpectedly quartered. There were C——n, K—— and I and a servant; the Count de B—— and his servant; Mr. W—— and his servant; Colonel Y—— and his men; mules, arrieros, spare mules and led horses—and all the *mozos* armed; forming altogether a formidable gang. We took leave of the Hechavarria family when it was already growing dusk, and when the moon had risen, found we had taken a great round, so that it was late at night when we arrived at *El Pilar*, a small hacienda, situated in a wild-looking, solitary part of the country. A servant had been sent forward to inform the lady of the establishment

of our approach, and we were most kindly received. The house is clean and pretty, and tired as we were, the *sala* boasting of an old piano, tempted us to try a waltz, while they were preparing supper. The man who waited at table, before he removed the things, popped down upon his knees, and recited a long prayer aloud. The gentlemen had one apartment prepared for them—we another, in which, nay, even in the large four-posted and well-curtained bed allotted to us, Madame Yturbide had slept when on her way to Mexico before her coronation. The Señora M—— also shewed us her picture, and spoke of her and the Emperor with great enthusiasm.

This morning we rose by candle-light at five o'clock, with the prospect of a long ride, having to reach the *Trojes of Angangueo*, a mining district, (*Trojes* literally mean granaries) fourteen leagues from El Pilar. The morning was cold and raw, with a dense fog covering the plains, so that we could scarcely see each other's faces, and found our *mangas* particularly agreeable. We were riding quickly across these ugly, marshy wastes, when a curious animal crossed our path, a *zorillo*, or *epatl* as the Indians call it, and which Bouffon mentions under the generic name of *Mouffetes*. It looks like a brown and white fox, with an enormous tail, which it holds up like a great feather in the air. It is known not only for the beauty of its skin, but for the horrible and pestilential odor with which it defends itself when attacked, and which poisons the air for miles around. Notwithstanding the warnings of the *mozos* as to its peculiar mode of defence, the gentlemen

pursued it with guns and pistols, on horseback and on foot, but fired in vain. The beast seemed bullet proof, turning, doubling, winding, crossing pools, hiding itself, stopping for a moment as if it were killed, and then trotting off again with its feathery tail much higher than its head ; so that it seemed to be running backwards. The fog favored it very much. It was certainly wounded in the paw, and as it stopped and seemed to hesitate, the sportsmen thought they had caught him — but a minute afterwards, away went the waving tail amongst the pools and the marshy grass, the zorillo no doubt accompanying it, though we could not see him, and fortunately without resorting to any offensive or defensive measures. While they were chasing the zorillo, and we had rode a little way off, that we might not be accidentally shot in the fog, an immense wolf came looming by in the mist, with its stealthy gallop, close by our horses, causing us to shout for the sportsmen ; but our numbers frightened it ; besides which, it had but just breakfasted on a mule belonging to the hacienda, as we were told by the son of the proprietress of El Pilar, who hearing all this distant firing, had ridden out to inquire into its cause, supposing that we might have lost our way in the fog, and were firing signals of distress.

We continued our journey across these plains for about three leagues, when the sun rose and scattered the mist, and after crossing a river, we entered the woods and rode between the shadows of the trees, through lovely forest scenery, interspersed with dells and plains and sparkling rivulets. But by the time

we left these woods and made our way up amongst the hills, the sun was riding high in the heavens, the pastures and green trees disappeared, and though the country was still fertile and the soil rich, its beauties lay hid in the valleys below. K——'s horse received a sort of *coup de soleil*, shivered and trembled, and would not go on; so she mounted another, and one of the *mozos* led her's slowly by a different road to a village, to be watered. About one o'clock we began to wish for breakfast, but the mules which carried the provisions had taken a different path, and were not in sight, so that, arriving at an Indian hut close by a running stream, we were unanimous in dismounting, and at least procuring some *tortillas* from the inmates. At the same time, the Count de B—— very philanthropically hired an old discolored-looking horse, which was grazing peaceably outside the hut, and mounting the astonished quadruped, who had never, in his wildest dreams, calculated upon having so fine a chevalier on his back, galloped off in search of more solid food, while we set the Indian women to baking *tortillas*. He returned in about half an hour, with some bones of boiled mutton, tied up in a handkerchief! some salt, and thick *tortillas*, called *gorditas*, and was received with immense applause. Everything vanished in an incredibly short space of time, and we resumed our journey with renewed vigor. Towards the afternoon we entered the State of Michoacan, by a road (destined to be a highway) traced through great pine forests, after stopping once more to rest at *Las Millas*, a few huts, or rather wooden cages, at the outskirts of the wood. Nothing

can be more beautiful or romantic than this road, ascending through these noble forests, whose lofty oaks and gigantic pines clothe the mountains to their highest summits ; sometimes so high that, as we look upwards, the trees seem diminished to shrubs and bushes ; the sun darting his warm, golden light between the dark green extended branches of these distant forest pyramids, so that they seem to be basking in the very focus of his rays. Untrodden and virgin as these forests appear, an occasional cross, with its withered garland, gives token of life, and also of death ; and green and lonely is the grave which the traveller has found among these Alpine solitudes, under the shadows of the dark pine, on a bed of fragrant wild flowers, fanned by the pure air from the mountain tops. The flowers which grow under the shade of the trees are beautiful and gay in their colors. Everywhere there are blue lupins, marigolds, dahlias, and innumerable blossoms with Indian names. Sometimes we dismounted and walked up the steepest parts, to rest our horses and ourselves, but as it was impossible to go fast on these stony paths, it became entirely dark before Anganguero was in sight ; and the road which, for a great part of the way, is remarkably good, now led us down a perpendicular descent amongst the trees, covered with rocks and stones, so that the horses stumbled, and one, which afterwards proved to be blind of one eye, and not to see very clearly with the other, fell and threw his rider, who was not hurt. It was near eight o'clock (and we had been on horseback since six in the morning) when, after crossing

a shallow stream, we saw the fires of the furnaces of Angangueo, a mining village, at the foot of some wild hills. We rode past the huts, where the blazing fires were shining on the swarthy faces of the workmen, the road skirting the valley, till we reached the house of Don Carlos Heimbürger, a Polish gentleman at the head of the German mining establishment. This house, the only one of any consequence at Angangueo, is extremely pretty, with a piazza in front, looking down upon the valley, which at night seems like the dwelling of the Cyclops, and within, a very picture of comfort. We were welcomed by the master of the house, and by Madame B——n, a pretty and accomplished German lady, the wife of a physician who resides there. We had already known her in Mexico, and were glad to renew our acquaintance in this outlandish spot. One must have travelled fourteen leagues, from morning till night, to know how comfortable her little drawing-room appeared, with its well-cushioned red sofas, bright lights, and vases of flowers, as we came in from the cold and darkness, and how pretty and *extra-civilized* she looked in her black satin gown, not to mention the excellent dinner and the large fires, for they have chimneys in this part of the world. In a nice little bed-room, with a cheerful fire, the second time I have seen one in two years, I indite these particulars, and shall continue from our next place of rest.

LETTER THE FORTY-NINTH.

Leave *Trojes* — Beautiful territory — Tarrascan Indians — Taximaroa — Distressed condition — An improvement — Cold morning — Querendaro — Fine breed of horses — San Bartolo — Produce — Country proprietors — *Colear* — Ride to Morelia — Wild ducks — Sunset — Cathedral bell — Cuincho — Curates Morelos, Matamoras and Hidalgo — Warm baths — Handsome girls — Starving travellers — Lost mules — Lancers — Night on a heap of straw — Mules found — Tzintzontzan — King Calsonsi — Pascuaro — Kind reception — Bishop — Robbers — Curu — Night in a barn — Mountain — Uruapa — Enchanting scenery — Pleasant family — Jorullo.

VALLADOLID, 25th.

As the house was so agreeable, and our next day's journey short, we could not prevail upon ourselves to leave the *Trojes* before nine o'clock; and even then, with the hopes of spending some time there on our return to see the mining establishment; the mills for grinding ore, the horizontal water-wheels, &c. &c.; and still more, the beautiful scenery in the neighborhood.

That you may understand our line of march, take a map of Mexico, and you will see that Michoacan, one of the most beautiful and fertile territories in the world, is bounded on the north by the river Lerma, afterwards known by the name of Rio Grande; also by the Department of Guanajuato; to the east and

northeast it bounds that of Mexico, and to the west, that of Guadalajara. It lies on the western slope of the Great Cordillera of Anahuac. Hills, woods, and beautiful valleys diversify its surface; its pasture grounds are watered by numerous streams, that rare advantage under the torrid zone, and the climate is cool and healthy. The Indians of this department are the Tarascos — the Ottomi and the Chichimeca Indians; the first are the most civilized of the tribes, and their language the most harmonious. We are now travelling in a northwesterly direction, towards the capital of the state, Valladolid, or Morelia, as it has been called since the independence, in honor of the curate Morelos, its great supporter.

We had a pleasant ride of nine leagues through an open pasture country, meeting with nothing very remarkable on our journey, but an Indian woman seated on the ground, her Indian husband standing beside her. Both had probably been refreshing themselves with pulque — perhaps even with its homœopathic extract *mezcal*; but the Indian was sober and sad, and stood with his arms folded, and the most patient and pitying face, while his wife, quite overcome with the strength of the potation, and unable to go any further, looked up at him with the most imploring air, saying repeatedly — “*Matame, Miguel, matame,*” (kill me, Miguel — kill me) — apparently considering herself quite unfit to live.

About five o’clock, we came in sight of the pretty village and old church of *Taximaroa*; and riding up to the *meson* or inn, found two empty dark rooms with mud floors — without windows, in fact without

anything but their four walls — neither bench, chair nor table. Although we travel with our own beds, this looked rather uninviting, especially after the pleasant quarters we had just left ; and we turned our eyes wistfully towards a pretty small house upon a hill, with a painted portico, thinking how agreeably situated we should be there ! Colonel Y—— thereupon rode up the hill, and presenting himself to the owner of this house, described our forlorn prospects ; and he kindly consented to permit us all to sup there, and moreover to receive the ladies for the night. For the gentlemen he had no room, having but one spare apartment, as one of his family was a great invalid, and could not be moved. Accordingly, our travelling luggage was carried up the hill ; the horses and mules and servants were quartered in the village, the gentlemen found lodging for themselves in a bachelor's house, and we found ourselves in very agreeable quarters, on a pretty piazza, with an extensive view ; and one large room, containing a table and some benches, at our service. Meanwhile, M. de B—— rushed through the village, finding eggs and hens and tortillas, and then returning, he and Mr. W—— produced the travelling stores of beef and tongue, and set about making mustard and drawing bottles of wine, to the great wonderment and edification of the honest proprietor. Even a clean tablecloth was produced ; a piece of furniture which he had probably never seen before, and now eyed wistfully, doubtless taking it for a *sheet*. We had a most amusing supper, some performing dexterously with penknives, and others using tortillas as

forks. We won the heart of the *bourgeois* by sending a cup of tea to his invalid, and inviting him to partake of another, which he seemed to consider a rare and medicinal beverage. About nine o'clock, the gentlemen departed to their lodgings, and our beds were erected in the large room where we had supped; the man assuring us that he was quite pleased to have us under his roof, and liked our company extremely well; adding, "*Me cuadra mucho la gente decente.*" "I am very fond of decent people."

We left Taximaroa at six o'clock, having spent rather a disturbed night, in consequence of the hollow coughs with which the whole family seemed afflicted, at least the poor invalid on one side of our room, and the master of the house on the other. The morning was so cold, that every manga and sarape was put in requisition. Our ride this day was through superb scenery, every variety of hill and valley, water and wood, particularly the most beautiful woods of lofty oaks, the whole with scarcely a trace of cultivation, and for the most part entirely uninhabited. Our numbers were augmented by Colonel Y——'s troop, who rode out from Morelia to meet him. We had a long journey, passed by the little village of *San Andrés*, and stopped to eat *tortillas* in a very dirty hut at Pueblo Viejo, surrounded by the dirtiest little Indian children. Throughout the whole ride, the trees and flowering shrubs were beautiful, and the scenery so varied, that although we rode for eleven hours in a hot sun, we scarcely felt fatigued, for wherever there are trees

and water and fresh green grass, the eye is rested. In this, and in our last few days' journey, we saw a number of blue birds, called by the common people *guardia-bosques*, wood guardians. About half past five we entered a winding road, through a natural shrubbery, leading to *Querendaro*, the fine hacienda of Señor Pimentel, a senator. When we arrived the family were at dinner, and we were invited to join them, after which we went out to see the hacienda, and especially the handsome and well-kept stables, where the proprietor has a famous breed of horses, some of which were trotted out for our inspection — beautiful, spirited creatures — one called "*Hilo de Oro*," golden thread — another, "*Pico Blanco*," white mouth, &c. In the inner court-yard are many beautiful and rare flowers, and everything is kept in great order.

At nine o'clock, the following morning, we left *Querendaro*, and rode on to *San Bartolo*, a vast and beautiful property, belonging to Señor Don Joaquin Gomez, of Valladolid. The family were from home, with the exception of his son and nephew, who did the honors of the house with such cordial and genuine hospitality, that we felt perfectly at home before the day was over. I think the Mexican character is never seen to such advantage as in the country, amongst these great landed proprietors of old family, who live on their own estates, engaged in agricultural pursuits, and entirely removed from all the party feeling and petty interests of a city life. It is true that the life of a country gentleman here is that of a hermit, in the total absence of all society, in the

nearly unbroken solitude that surrounds him. For leagues and leagues there is no habitation but his own; the nearest miserable village may be distant half a day's journey, over an almost impassable road. He is "monarch of all he surveys," a king amongst his farm servants and Indian workmen. Nothing can exceed the independence of his position; but to enjoy this wild country life, he must be born to it. He must be a first-rate horseman, and addicted to all kinds of country sport; and if he can spend the day in riding over his estate, in directing his workmen, watching over his improvements, redressing disputes and grievances, and can sit down in the evening in his large and lonely halls, and philosophically bury himself in the pages of some favorite author, then his time will probably not hang heavy on his hands.

As for the *young master* here, he was up with the lark — he was on the most untractable horse in the hacienda, and away across the fields with his followers, chasing the bulls as he went — he was fishing — he was shooting — he was making bullets — he was leagues off at a village, seeing a country bull-fight — he was always in a good humor, and so were all who surrounded him — he was engaged in the dangerous amusement of *colear* — and by the evening it would have been a clever writer who had kept *his* eyes open after such a day's work. Never was there a young lad more evidently fitted for a free life in the country.

There was a generous, frank liberality apparent in everything in this hacienda, that it was agreeable to witness; nothing petty or calculating. Señor —,

lame through an accident, and therefore unable to mount his horse, or to go far on foot, seemed singularly gentle and kind-hearted. The house is one of the prettiest and most cheerful we have seen yet ; but we passed a great stone building on the road, which the proprietor of San Bartolo is having constructed for one of his family, which, if it keep its promise, will be a palace when finished. The principal produce of this hacienda is *pimiento*, the capsicum. There is the *pimiento dulce* and the *pimiento picante*, the sweet fruit of the common capsicum, and the fruit of the bird pepper capsicum. The Spaniards gave to all these peppers the name of *chile*, which they borrowed from the Indian word *quauhchilli*, and which, to the native Mexicans, is as necessary an ingredient of food as salt is to us. At dinner we had the greatest variety of fine fruit, and pulque, which is particularly good in this neighborhood. They also make here a quantity of excellent cheese.

After dinner they proceeded to amuse us with the *colear* of the bulls, of which amusement, the Mexicans throughout the whole Republic, are passionately fond. They collect a herd, single out several, gallop after them on horseback ; and he who is most skilful, catches the bull by the tail, passes it under his own right leg, turns it round the high pummel of his saddle, and wheeling his horse round at right angles by a sudden movement, the bull falls on his face. Even boys of ten years old joined in this sport. It is no wonder that the Mexicans are such *centaurs*, seeming to form part and parcel of their horses, accustomed as they are from childhood to these dangerous pas-

times. This is very dangerous, since the horses' legs constantly get entangled with those of the falling bull, which throws both horse and rider. Manifold are the accidents which result from it, but they are certainly not received as warnings; and after all, such sports, where there is nothing bloody, nor even cruel, saving the thump which the bull gets, and the mortification which he no doubt feels, but from both of which he soon recovers; and which are mere games of skill, trials of address—are manly and strengthening, and help to keep up the physical superiority of that fine race of men—the Mexican *rancheros*.

The next day we parted from our travelling companions, the Count de B—— and Mr. W——, who are on their way to the fair of San Juan, and are from thence going to *Tepic*, even to the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Unfortunately, our time is limited, and we cannot venture on so distant an expedition; but we greatly regretted separating from such pleasant *compagnons de voyage*. We spent the morning in walking about the hacienda, seeing cheese made, and visiting the handsome chapel, the splendid stone granaries, the great mills, &c. We also hope to spend some time here on our return. By letters received this morning from Mexico, we find that Señor Gomez Pedraza has left the Ministry.

As we had but six leagues to ride in order to reach Morelia, we did not leave San Bartolo till four in the afternoon, and enjoyed a pretty ride through a fertile and well-wooded country, the road good and the evening delightful. As the sun set, millions and tens of millions of ducks, in regular ranks and regiments,

darkening the air, flew over our heads, changing their quarters from one lake to another. Morelia is celebrated for the purity of its atmosphere and the exceeding beauty of its sky; and this evening, upheld its reputation. Toward sunset, the whole western horizon was covered with myriads of little lilac and gold clouds, floating in every fantastic form over the bright blue of the heavens. The lilac deepened into purple, blushed into rose-color, brightened into crimson. The blue of the sky assumed that green tint peculiar to an Italian sunset. The sun himself appeared a globe of living flame. Gradually he sank in a blaze of gold and crimson, while the horizon remained lighted as by the flame from a volcano. Then his brilliant retinue of clouds, after blazing for a while in borrowed splendor, melted gradually into every rainbow hue and tinge; from deep crimson to rose-color and pink and pale violet and faint blue, floating in silvery vapor, until they all blended into one soft, gray tinge, which swept over the whole western sky. But then the full moon rose in cloudless serenity, and at length we heard, faintly, then more distinctly, and then in all its deep and sonorous harmony, the tolling of the cathedral bell, which announced our vicinity to a great city. It has a singular effect, after travelling for some days through a wild country, seeing nothing but a solitary hacienda, or an Indian hut, to enter a fine city like Morelia, which seems to have started up as by magic in the midst of the wilderness, yet bearing all the traces of a venerable old age. By moonlight, it looked like a panorama of Mexico; with a fine square, portales,

cathedral, broad streets and good houses. We rode through the city, to the house of Colonel Y——, where we now are ; but as we intend to continue our journey to its furthest limits without stopping, we are now, after a night's rest, preparing to resume our ride. They are saddling the horses, strapping on the sarapes behind the saddles, taking down and packing up our *lits de voyage*, and loading the mules, all which is a work of time. On our return we hope to remain here a few days, to see everything that is worthy of notice.

PASCUARO.

Accompanied by several gentlemen of Morelia, who came early in the morning to see C——n, we set off for the warm baths of *Cuincho* ; and as we rode along, the hill of *Las Bateas* was pointed out to us, where, by order of the Curate Morelos, two hundred Spaniards were murdered in cold blood, to revenge the death of his friend, the Curate Matamoros, who was taken prisoner and shot by orders of Yturvide. Horrible cruelty in a Christian priest ! It is singular, that the great leaders of the independence should have been ecclesiastics ; the Curate Hidalgo its prime mover, the Curates Morelos and Matamoros the principal chiefs. Hidalgo, it is said, had no plan, published no manifesto, declared no opinions ; but rushed from city to city at the head of his men, displaying on his colors an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and inciting his troops to massacre the Spaniards. Morelos was an Indian, uneducated, but brave and enterprising, and considered the mildest

and most merciful of these soldier priests ! Matamoros, equally brave, was better informed. Both were good generals, and both misused the power which their position gave them over the minds of the unenlightened populace. When Morelos became generalissimo of the revolutionary forces, he took a step fatal to his interests, and which led to his ultimate ruin. He formed a congress, which met at Chilpancingo, and was composed of lawyers and clergymen ; ignorant and ambitious men, who employed themselves in publishing absurd decrees and impossible laws, in assigning salaries to themselves, and giving each other the title of *Excellency*. Disputes and divisions arose amongst them, and in 1814, they published an absurd and useless document in the village of Apatzingan, to which they gave the name of the "Mexican Constitution." The following year, Morelos was defeated in an engagement which took place in the environs of Tescmelaca, taken prisoner, led to Mexico, and, after a short trial, degraded from his ecclesiastical functions, and shot in the village of San Cristobal Ecatepec, seven leagues from the capital. The revolutionary party considered him as a martyr in the cause of liberty, and he is said to have died like a true hero. The appellation of Morelia, given to the city of Valladolid, keeps his name in remembrance, but her blood-stained mountain is a more lasting record of his cruelty.

A vile action is recorded of a Spaniard, whose name, which deserves to be branded with infamy, escapes me at this moment. The soldiers of Morelos having come in search of him, he, standing at his

door, pointed out his brother, who was in a room inside the house, as the person whom they sought; and escaped himself, leaving his brother to be massacred in his place. We contrasted the conduct of this miserable wretch with the noble action of the Prince de Polignac, under similar circumstances.

At half past ten, after a pleasant ride of about five leagues, we arrived at the natural hot springs of Cuincho. The place is quite wild, the scenery very striking. The building consists of two very large baths, two very damp rooms, and a kitchen. The baths are kept by a very infirm old man, a martyr to intermittent fever, and two remarkably handsome girls, his daughters, who live here completely alone, and, except in summer, when the baths are resorted to by a number of *canónigos* and occasional gentlemen from Morelia, "waste their sweetness on the desert air." The house, such as it is, lies at the foot of rocky hills, covered with shrubs and pouring down streams of hot water from their volcanic bosoms. All the streams that cross your path are warm. You step by chance into a little streamlet, and find the water of a most agreeable temperature. They put this water in earthen jars to cool, in order to render it fit for drinking, but it never becomes fresh and cold. It contains muriatic acid, without any trace of sulphur or metallic salt. I think it is Humboldt who supposes that in this part of Mexico there exists, at a great depth in the interior of the earth, a fissure running from east to west, for one hundred and thirty-seven leagues, through which, bursting the external crust of the porphyritic rocks, the volcanic fire has

opened itself a passage at different times, from the coasts of the Mexican Gulf, as far as the South Sea. The famous volcano of Jorullo is in this department, and boiling fountains are common in various parts of it.

We stopped here to take a bath, and found the temperature of the water delicious, about the ordinary temperature of the human body. The baths are rather dark, being inclosed in great stone walls, with the light coming from a very small aperture near the roof. A bird, that looked like a wild duck, was sailing about in the largest one, having made its entry along with the water when it was let in. I never bathed in any water which I so much regretted leaving. After bathing, we waited for the arrival of our mules, which were to follow us at a gentle pace, that we might have breakfast, and continue our journey to *Pascuaro*, a city nine leagues further.

But several hours passed away, and no mules appeared ; and at length we came to the grievous conviction that the arrieros had mistaken the road, and that we must expect neither food nor beds that night ; for it was now too late to think of reaching *Pascuaro*. In this extremity, the gentlemen from Morelia suffering for their politeness in having escorted us, the two damsels of the bath, naiads of the boiling spring, pitying our hungry condition, came to offer their services ; and one asked me if I should like “to eat a *burro* in the mean time ?” A *burro* being an *ass*, I was rather startled at the proposition, and assured her that I should infinitely prefer waiting a little longer, before resorting to so desperate a mea-

sure. "Some people call them *pecadoras*," said her sister, (female sinners!) Upon this, the gentlemen came to our assistance, and burros or *pecadoras* were ordered forthwith. They proved to be hot tortillas, with cheese in them, and we found them particularly good. It grew late, but no mules arrived; and at length the young ladies and their father rushed out desperately, caught an old hen that was wandering amongst the hills, killed, skinned and put it into a pot to boil, baked some fresh tortillas, and brought us the spoil in triumph! One penknife was produced — the boiling pan placed on a deal table in the room off the bath, and every one, surrounding the fowl, a tough old creature, who must have clucked through many revolutions, we ate by turns, and concluded with a comfortable drink of lukewarm water.

We then tried to beguile the time by climbing amongst the hills at the back of the house — by pushing our way through the tangled briars — by walking to a little lake, where there were ducks and waterfowl, and close to the margin, a number of fruit trees. We returned to the baths — the mules had not been heard of — there was no resource but patience. Our Morelian friends left us, to return home before it should grow dusk; and shortly after, an escort of twenty-three lancers, with a captain, arrived by orders of the governor, Don Panfilo Galiudo, to accompany us during the remainder of our journey. They looked very picturesque, with their lances, and little scarlet flags, and gave a very formidable aspect to the little portico in front of the baths, where they deposited all their military accoutrements — their

saddles, guns, sarapes, &c. The captain had with him his wife and daughter, and a baby of about two years old, which, during all the time they were with us, was constantly carried by one of the soldiers, with the utmost care, in front of his horse.

Meanwhile, the moon rose, and we walked about disconsolate, in front of the baths — fearing greatly that some accident might have overtaken our unescorted mules and servants; that the first might be robbed — and that the drivers might be killed. But it was as well to try to sleep if it were only to get over the interminable night; and at length some clean straw was procured, and spread in a corner of the damp floor. There K—— and I lay down in our mangas. C——n procured another corner — Colonel Y—— a third, and then and thus, we addressed ourselves seriously to repose; but in vain. Between cold and mosquitoes and other animals, we could not close our eyes, and were thankful to rise betimes, shake the straw off, and resume our march.

The road was pretty and flowery when the light came in, and we gradually began to open our eyes, after taking leave of our fair hostesses and their father. When I say *the road*, you do not, I trust, imagine us riding along a dusty highway. I am happy to say that we are generally the discoverers of our own path-ways. Every man his own Columbus. Sometimes we take short cuts, which prove to be long rounds;

“ Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough briar ; ”

through valley and over stream; and this kind of journey has something in it so independent and amusing, that with all its fatigues and inconveniences, we find it delightful — far preferable even to travelling in the most commodious London-built carriage, bowling along the Queen's highway with four swift posters, at the rate of twelve miles an hour.

Arrived at some huts, we stopped to make inquiries concerning the mules. Two loaded mules, the peasants said, had been robbed in the night, and the men tied to a tree, on the low road leading to Pascuaro. We rode on uneasy enough, and at another hut were told that many robbers had been out in the night, and that amongst others, a woman had been robbed, and bound hand and foot. The road now become bleak and uninteresting, the sun furiously hot, and we rode forward with various misgivings as to the fate of the party; when at a cluster of huts called *el Correo*, we came up with the whole concern. The arrieros had forgotten the name of Cuincho, and not knowing where to go, had stopped here the previous night, knowing that we were bound for Pascuaro, and must pass that way. They had arrived early, and missed the robbers.

We stopped to breakfast at some huts called La Puerta de Chapultepec, where we got some tortillas from a half-caste Indian, who was in great distress, because his wife had run off from him for the fourth time, with "another gentleman!" He vowed that though he had taken her back three times, he never would receive her more; yet I venture to say that when the false fair one presents herself, she will find

him placable ; he is evidently in such distress at having no woman to take care of his house.

After leaving Chapultepec, the scenery improves, and at length we had a beautiful view of the hills, at the foot of which lies the ancient city of *Tzintzontzan*, close by the opposite shore of the Lake of Pascuaro ; formerly capital of the independent kingdom of Michoacan, an important city, and called in the time of Cortes, *Hurtzitzila*. It was formerly the residence of the monarch — King *Calsonsi*, an ally of Cortes, and who, with his Indian subjects, assisted him in his Mexican war. It is now a poor Indian village, though it is said that some remains of the monarch's palace still exist. Apropos to which, we have several times observed, since we entered this State, large stones lying in fields, or employed in fences, with strange hieroglyphic characters engraved on them, some of which may be very curious and interesting.

The view as we approach Pascuaro, with its beautiful lake, studded with little islands, is very fine. The bells were tolling, and they were letting off rockets for some Indian festival, and we met parties of the natives who had been keeping the festival upon *pulque* or *mezcal*, (a strong spirit) and were stumbling along in great glee. We came up to an old church, that looks like a bird's-nest amongst the trees, and stands at the outskirts of the city. Here, it is said, his Majesty of Michoacan came out to meet his Spanish ally, when he entered this territory.

Pascuaro is a pretty little city with sloping roofs, situated on the shores of the lake of the same name,

and in front of the little Indian village of Janicho, built on a beautiful small island in the midst of the lake. C——n says that Pascuaro resembles a town in Catalonia. It is entirely unlike any other Mexican city. We made a great sensation as we entered with our lancers and mules, tired and dust-becovered as we were — and brought all the *Pascuaranians* to their balconies. We passed churches bearing the date of 1580! We went to the largest and best house in the town, that of Don Miguel H——a, (a friend of Colonel Y——'s.) He was from home, but we were most hospitably entertained by his wife, who received us without any unnecessary ceremony or compliments, and made us quite at home. We walked out with her by moonlight, to see the Square and the Portales, which is a promenade in the evening; and were followed by crowds of little boys; strangers being rather an uncommon spectacle here. The only foreign lady, Doña ——, says, who ever was here in her recollection, was a Frenchwoman, to whom she was very much attached, the daughter of a physician, and whose husband was murdered by the robbers.

This morning, the weather being cold and rainy, and our quarters too agreeable to leave in any violent haste, we agreed to remain until to-morrow, and have spent a pleasant day in this fine large house, with Doña ——, and her numerous and handsome children. We have not been able to visit the lake, or the Indian islands, on account of the weather, but we hope to do so on our return from *Uruapa*, our next destination. Our hostess is a most agreeable

person ; lively, kind-hearted, and full of natural talent. We did not expect to meet such a person in this corner of the world.

The first Bishop of Michoacan, Vasco de Quiroga, who died in Uruapa, was buried in Pascuaro, and the Indians of this State still venerate his memory. He was the father and benefactor of these Tarrascan Indians, and went far to rescue them from their degraded state. He not only preached morality, but encouraged industry amongst them, by assigning to each village its particular branch of commerce. Thus one was celebrated for its manufacture of saddles, another for its shoes a third for its *bateas*, (painted trays) and so on. Every useful institution, of which some traces still remain amongst them, is due to this excellent prelate ; an example of what one good and zealous and well-judging man can effect.

We have been taking another stroll by moonlight, the rain having ceased ; we have lingered over a pleasant supper, and have wished Doña —— good-night. Yet let me not forget, before laying down my pen, to celebrate the excellence of the white fish from the lake ! so greatly surpassing in excellence and flavor those which we occasionally have in Mexico. These no doubt must have constituted “ *the provisions*,” which according to tradition, were carried by regular running posts, from Tzintzontzan to Montezuma’s palace in Mexico, and with such expedition, that though the distance is about one hundred leagues, they were placed, still smoking, on the Emperor’s table !

URUAPA, 30th.

We went to mass at six o'clock ; and then took leave of the Señora H——a, who gave us a cordial invitation to spend some days with her on our return. It was about eight o'clock when we left Pascuaro, and mounted the hills over which our road lay, and stopped to look down on the beautiful lake, lying like a sheet of silver in the sun, and dotted with green islands.

Two disagreeable personages were added to our party. Early in the morning, intelligence was brought that a celebrated robber, named *Morales*, captain of a large band, had been seized along with one of his companions ; and permission was requested to take advantage of our large escort, in order that they may be safely conducted to Uruapa, where they are to be shot, being already condemned to death. The punishment of hanging is not in use in Mexico.

The first thing therefore that we saw, on mounting our horses, was the two robbers, chained together by the leg, guarded by five of our lancers, and prepared to accompany us on foot. The companion of *Morales* was a young, vulgar-looking ruffian, his face livid, and himself nearly naked ; but the robber-captain himself was equal to any of Salvator's brigands, in his wild and striking figure and countenance. He wore a dark colored blanket, and a black hat, the broad leaf of which was slouched over his face, which was the color of death, while his eyes seemed to belong to a tiger or other beast of prey. I never saw such a picture of fierce misery. Strange to say, this man began life as a shepherd ; but how he was in-

duced to abandon this pastoral occupation, we did not hear. For years he has been the scourge of the country, robbing to an unheard of extent, (so that whatever he may have done with them, tens of thousands of dollars have passed through his hands,) carrying off the farmers' daughters to the mountains, and at the head of eighty ruffians, committing the most horrible disorders. His last crime was murdering his wife in the mountains, the night before last, under circumstances of barbarity too shocking to relate, and it is supposed, assisted by the wretch now with him. After committing the crime, they ran to hide themselves in an Indian village, as the Indians, probably from fear, never betray the robbers. However, their horror of this man was so great, that perfect *hate* cast out their fear, and collecting together, they seized the ruffians, bound them, and carried them to Pascuaro, where they were instantly tried, and condemned to be shot ; the sentence to be executed at Uruapa.

The sight of these miserable wretches, and the idea of what their feelings must be, occupied us, as they toiled along, each step bringing them nearer to their place of execution, and we could not help thinking what wild wishes must have sometimes throbbed within them, of breaking their bonds, and dashing away from their guards—away, through the dark woods, over mountain and river, down that almost perpendicular precipice, over the ravine, up that green and smiling hill, and into these gloomy pine woods, in whose untrod recesses they would be secure from pursuit—and then their despair, when they felt the

heavy, clanking chain on their bare feet, and looked at the lances and guns that surrounded them, and knew that even if they attempted to fly, could they be insane enough to try it, a dozen bullets would stop their career for ever. Then horror and disgust at the recollection of their savage crimes, took the place of pity, and not even ——'s suggestion that the robber-chief might have killed his wife in a transport of jealousy, could lessen our indignation at this last most barbarous murder of a defenceless woman.

But these thoughts took away half the pleasure of this most beautiful journey, through wild woods, where for leagues and leagues we meet nothing but the fatal *cross* ; while through these woods of larches, cedars, oaks and pines, are bright vistas of distant pasture-fields, and of lofty mountains covered with forests. Impossible to conceive a greater variety of beautiful scenery — a greater *waste* of beauty, if one may say so — for not even an Indian hut was to be seen, nor did we meet a single passing human being, nor a trace of cultivation. As we came out of the woods, we heard a gun fired amongst the hills, the first token of human life that had greeted us since we left Pascuaro. This, Señor —— told us, was the signal-gun, usually fired by the Indians on the approach of an armed troop, warning their brethren to hide themselves. Here the Indians rarely speak Spanish, as those do who live in the neighborhood of cities. Their language is chiefly the harmonious Tarrascan.

Towards the afternoon, we came to a path which led us into a valley of the most surpassing beauty,

entirely carpeted with the loveliest blue, white, pink and scarlet wild flowers, and clothed with natural orchards of peach and apricot trees in full bloom ; the grass strewn with their rich blossoms. Below, ran a sparkling rivulet, its bright gushing waters leaping over the stones and pebbles that shone in the sun like silver. Near this are some huts called *Las Palomas*, and it was so charming a spot, that we got off our horses, and halted for half an hour ; and while they prepared breakfast for us, a basket of provisions from Pascuaro having been brought on by the provident care of Doña —— we clambered about amongst the rocks and luxuriant trees that dipped their leafy branches in the stream, and pulled wild flowers that would grace any European garden.

Having breakfasted in one of the huts, upon fowl and tortillas, on which memorable occasion two penknives were produced, (and I still wonder why we did not bring some knives and forks with us, unless it be that we should never have had them cleaned,) we continued our journey. And this mention of knives leads me to remark, that all common servants in Mexico, and all common people, eat with their fingers ! Those who are rather particular, roll up two tortillas, and use them as knife and fork ; which I can assure you from experience, is a great deal better than nothing, when you have learnt how to use them.

Our road after this, though even wilder and more picturesque, was very fatiguing to the horses ; up and down steep rocks, among forests of oak and pine, through which we slowly wended our way, so that it

was dark when we descended a precipitous path, leading to a small Indian village, or rather encampment, called *Curu*. It was now too late to think of reaching Uruapa, or of venturing to climb by night the series of precipices called the *Cuesta de Curu*, over which we should have had to pass. But such a place as *Curu* for Christians to pass the night in ! A few miserable huts filled with Indians ; and not, so far as we could discern, even an empty shed, where we might rest under cover. However, there was no remedy. The *arriero* had already unloaded his mules, and was endeavoring to find some provender for them and the poor horses. It was quite dark, but there was a delicious fragrance of orange blossom, and we groped our way up to the trees, and pulled some branches by way of consolation. At length, an old wooden barn was discovered ; and there the beds of the whole party were put up ! We even contrived to get some boiling water, and to have some tea made, an article of luxury which, as well as a teapot, we carry with us. We sat down upon our trunks, and a piece of candle was procured and lighted, and after some difficulty, made to stand upright on the floor. The barn made of logs, let the air in on all sides, and the pigs thrust their snouts in at every crevice, grunting harmoniously. Outside, in the midst of the encampment, the soldiers lighted a large fire, and sat round it roasting maize. The robbers sat amongst them, chained, with a soldier mounting guard beside them. The fire, flashing on the livid face of Morales, who, crouched in his blanket, looked like a tiger about to spring — the soldiers,

some warming their hands at the blaze, some lying rolled in their sarapes, and others devouring their primitive supper — together with the Indian women bringing them hot tortillas from the huts — the whole had a curious and picturesque effect. As for us, we also rolled ourselves in our mangas, and lay down in our barn, but passed a miserable night. The pigs grunted, the mosquitoes sung, a cold air blew in from every corner ; and fortunately, we were not until morning, aware of the horrid fact, that a whole nest of scorpions, with their tails twisted together, were reposing above our heads in the log wall. Imagine the condition of the unfortunate slumberer, on whose devoted head they had descended *en masse* ! In spite of the fragrant orange blossom, we were glad to set off early the next morning.

URUAPA.

On leaving the fascinating village of *Curu*, we began to ascend *La Cuesta* ; and travelled slowly four leagues of mountain road, apparently inaccessible ; but the sure-footed horses, though stepping on loose and nearly precipitous rocks, rarely stumbled. The mountain of *Curu* is volcanic, a chaos of rent rocks, beetling precipices, and masses of lava that have been disgorged from the burning crater. Yet from every crag and crevice of the rock spring the most magnificent trees, twisted with flowering parasites, shrubs of the brightest green, and pale, delicate flowers, whose gentle hues seem all out of place in this savage scene. Beside the forest oak and the stern pine, the tree of the white blossoms, the graceful *floripundio*, seems to

seek for shelter and support. Creepers that look like scarlet honeysuckle, and flowering vines of every variety of color, hang in bright garlands and festoons, intertwining the boughs of the trees ; adorning, but not concealing the masses of bare rock and the precipitous crag that frowns amidst all this luxury of vegetation. The whole scene is "horribly beautiful."

As we wound through these precipitous paths, where only one can go at a time, our train stretched out to an immense distance, and the scarlet streamers and lances of the soldiers looked very picturesque, appearing and then vanishing amongst the rocks and trees. At one part, looking back to see the effect, I caught the eye of the robber Morales, glaring with such a frightful expression, that, forgetful of his chains, I whipped up my horse, in the greatest consternation, over stones and rocks. He and the scene were in perfect unison.

At length we came to the end of this extraordinary mountain-forest, and after resting the tired horses for a little while, in a grove of pines and yellow acacias, entered the most lovely little wood, a succession of flowers and shrubs and bright green grass, with vistas of fertile cornfields bordered by fruit trees ; a peaceful scene, on which the eye rests with pleasure, after passing through these wild, volcanic regions.

On leaving the woods, the path skirts along by the side of these fields, and leads to the valley where Uruapa, the gem of Indian villages, lies in tranquil beauty. It has indeed some tolerable streets and a few good houses ; but her boast is in the Indian cottages ; all so clean and snug, and tasteful, and buried in fruit trees.

We rode through shady lanes of trees, bending under the weight of oranges, *chirimoyas*, *granaditas*, *platanos*, and every sort of delicious fruit. We found that, through the kindness of Señor Ysasaga, the principal person here, the curate's house had been prepared to receive us; an old unfurnished house next the church, and at present unoccupied, its owner being absent. We found the whole family extremely kind and agreeable; the father, a well-informed, pleasant old gentleman; the mother still beautiful, though in bad health; and all the daughters pretty and unaffected. One is married to a brother of Madame Yturbide's. They made many apologies for not inviting us to their own house, which is under repair; but as it is but a few steps off, we shall spend most of our time with them. It seems strange to meet such people in this secluded spot! Yet, peaceful and solitary as it appears, it has not escaped the rage of civil war, having been burnt down four different times by insurgents and by Spaniards. Señor Ysasaga, who belongs to Valladolid, has taken an active part in all the revolutions, having been the personal friend and partisan of Hidalgo. His escapes and adventures would fill a volume.

I could not help taking one last look of the robbers, as we entered this beautiful place, where Morales at least is to be shot. It seemed to me that they had grown perfectly deathlike. The poor wretches must be tired enough, having come on foot all the way from Pascuaro.

31st. — This place is so charming, we have deter-

mined to pitch our tent in it for a few days. Our intention was to proceed twenty leagues further, to see the volcano of Jorullo; but as the road is described to us as being entirely devoid of shade, and the heat almost insupportable — with various other difficulties and drawbacks, — we have been induced though with great regret, to abandon the undertaking; which it is as tantalizing to do, as it is to reflect that yesterday we were but a short distance from a hill which is but thirty leagues from the Pacific Ocean.

In 1813, M. de Humboldt and M. Bonpland, ascended to the crater of this burning mountain, which was formed in September, 1759. Its birth was announced by earthquakes, which put to flight all the inhabitants of the neighboring villages; and three months after, a terrible eruption burst forth, which filled all the inhabitants with astonishment and terror, and which Humboldt considers one of the most extraordinary physical revolutions that ever took place on the surface of the globe.

Flames issued from the earth for the space of more than a square league. Masses of burning rock were thrown to an immense height, and through a thick cloud of ashes illuminated by the volcanic fire, the whitened crust of the earth was seen gradually swelling up. The ashes even covered the roofs of the houses at Querétaro, forty-eight leagues distance! and the rivers of San Andres and Cuitumba sank into the burning masses. The flames were seen from Pascuaro; and from the hills of Agua-Zarca was beheld the birth of this volcanic mountain, the burning

offspring of an earthquake, which, bursting from the bosom of the earth, changed the whole face of the country, for a considerable distance round.

——— “And now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain mirth,
As if they did rejoice o’er a young earthquake’s birth.”

Here the earth returned that salutation, and shook, though it was with fearful mirth, as the birth of the young volcano.

In a letter written at the time of this event to the Bishop of Michioacan by the curate of the neighboring village, he says, that the eruption finished by destroying the hacienda of Jorullo, and killing the trees, which were thrown down and buried in the sand and ashes vomited by the mountain. The fields and roads were, he says, covered with sand, the crops destroyed, and the flocks perishing for want of food; unable to drink the pestilential water of the mountains. The rivulet that ran past his village, was swelled to a mighty river that threatened to inundate it; and he adds, that the houses, churches and hospitals are ready to fall down from the weight of the sand and the ashes — and that “the very people are so covered with the sand, that they seem to have come out of some sepulchre.” The great eruptions of the volcano continued till the following year, but have gradually become rarer, and at present have ceased.

Having now brought our journey to its furthest limits, I shall conclude this letter.

LETTER THE FIFTIETH.

Indian Dresses — Saints — Music — Union of tropical and European vegetation — Old Customs — Falls of the Sararaqui — Silkworms — Indian painting — Beautiful heroine — Leave Uruapa — Tziracuaratiro — Talkative Indian — Alcalde's house — Pascuaro — Old church — Mosaic work — The lake — The cave — Fried fish — Rich Indians — Convent — Cuincho — Darkness — Morelia — Alameda — Cathedral — Silver — Waxworks — College — Wonderful fleas.

URUAPA, 31st.

THE dress of the Indian women of Uruapa is pretty, and they are altogether a much cleaner and better-looking race than we have yet seen. They wear "*naguas*," a petticoat of black cotton with a narrow white and blue stripe, made very full, and rather long; over this, a sort of short chemise made of coarse, white cotton, and embroidered in different colored silks. It is called the *sutunacua* — over all is a black reboso, striped with white and blue, with a handsome, silk fringe of the same colors. When they are married, they add a white embroidered veil, and a remarkably pretty colored mantle the *huepilli*, which they seem to pronounce *guipil*. The hair is divided, and falls down behind in two long plaits, fastened at the top by a bow of ribbon and a flower. In this dress there is no alteration from what they wore in former days; saving that the women of a

higher class wore a dress of finer cotton with more embroidery, and a loose garment over all, resembling a priest's surplice, when the weather was cold. Among the men, the introduction of trowsers is Spanish — but they still wear the *majlatl*, a broad belt, with the ends tied before and behind, and the *tilmatli* or *tilma* as they now call it, a sort of square short cloak, the ends of which are tied across the breast, or over one shoulder. It is on a coarse *tilma* of this description, that the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe was found painted.

Yesterday, being the festival of San Andres, the Indians were all in full costume and procession, and we went into the old church to see them. They were carrying the Saint in very fine robes, the women bearing colored flags and lighted tapers, and the men playing on violins, flutes, and drums. All had garlands of flowers to hang on the altars; and for these lights and ornaments, and silk and tinsel robes, they save up all their money. They were playing a pretty air, but I doubt its being original. It was not melancholy and monotonous, like the generality of Indian music, but had something wild and gay in it; it was probably Spanish. The organ was played by an Indian. After mass we went up stairs to try it, and wondered how, with such miserable means, he had produced anything like music. In the *patio*, between the curate's house and the church, are some very brilliant large scarlet flowers, which they call here "*flor del pastor*," the shepherd's flower; a beautiful kind of *euphorbia*; and in other places, "*flor de noche buena*," flower of Christmas eve.

Last evening we walked out in the environs of this garden of Eden, by the banks of the river *Marques*, amidst a most extraordinary union of tropical and European vegetation ; the hills covered with firs and the plains with sugar cane. We walked amongst bananas, shaddock, chirimoyas, and orange trees, and but a few yards higher up, bending over and almost touching them, were groves of oak and pine. The river pursues its bright unwearied course through this enchanting landscape, now falling in cascades, now winding placidly at the foot of the silent hills and among the dark woods, and in one part forming a most beautiful natural bath, by pouring its waters into an enclosure of large, smooth, flat stones, overshadowed by noble trees.

A number of the old Indian customs are still kept up here, modified by the introduction of Christian doctrines, in their marriages, feasts, burials, and superstitious practices. They also preserve the same simplicity in their dress, united with the same vanity and love of show in their ornaments, which always distinguished them. The poorest Indian woman still wears a necklace of red coral, or a dozen rows of red beads, and their dishes are still the *gicalli*, or, as they were called by the Spaniards, *gicaras*, made of a species of gourd, or rather a fruit resembling it, and growing on a low tree, which fruit they cut in two, each one furnishing two dishes ; the inside is scooped out, and a durable varnish given it by means of a mineral earth, of different bright colors, generally red. On the outside they paint flowers, and some of them are also gilded. They are extremely pretty,

very durable and ingenious. The beautiful colors which they employ in painting these *jicaras* are composed not only of various mineral productions, but of the wood, leaves and flowers of certain plants, of whose properties they have no despicable knowledge. Their own dresses, manufactured by themselves of cotton, are extremely pretty, and many of them very fine.

December 1st. — We rode out early this morning, and passing through the lanes bordered with fruit trees, and others covered with blossoms of extraordinary beauty, of whose names I only know the *floripundio*, ascended into the pine woods, fragrant and gay with wild thyme and bright flowers; the river falling in small cascades among the rocks. After riding along these heights for about two leagues, we arrived at the edge of a splendid valley of oaks. Here we were obliged to dismount, and to make our way on foot down the longest, steepest, and most slippery of paths, winding in rapid descent through the woods; with the prospect of being repaid for our toil, by the sight of the celebrated Falls of the *Sararaqui*. After having descended to the foot of the oak-covered mountain, we came to a great enclosure of lofty rocks, prodigious natural bulwarks, through a great cavern in which, the river comes thundering and boiling into the valley, forming the great cascade of the *Sararaqui*, which in the Tarrascan language means *sieve*. It is a very fatiguing descent, but it is worth while to make the whole journey from Mexico, to see anything so wildly grand. The falls are from fifty to sixty feet

high, and of great volume. The rocks are covered with shrubs and flowers, with small jets of water issuing from every crevice. One lovely flower, that looks as if it were formed of small white and rose-colored shells, springs out of the stones near the water. There are rattlesnakes among the woods, and wild boars have occasionally been seen. The Señoritas Y——, when children, two or three years ago, wandering among these mountain paths, saw an immense rattlesnake coiled up, and tempted by its gaudy colors, were about to lift it; when it suddenly awakened from its slumber, uncoiled itself, and swiftly glided up the path before them, its rattles sounding all the way up amongst the hills.

We sat beside the falls for a long while, looking at the boiling, hissing, bubbling, foaming waters, rolling down headlong with such impetuous velocity that one could hardly believe they form part of the same placid stream, which flows so gently between its banks, when no obstacles oppose it; and at all the little silvery threads of water, that formed mimic cascades among the rocks; but at length we were obliged to recommence our toilsome march up the slippery mountain. We were accompanied by several officers — amongst others, by the comandante of Uruapa.

Señor —— says that they are at present occupied here at the instigation of a Frenchman, named *Genould*, in planting a large collection of mulberry trees, (which prosper wonderfully well in this climate) for the propagation of silkworms. But they have no facilities for transport, and at what market

could the silk be sold? There are a thousand improvements wanting here, which would be more profitable than this speculation. They have sugar, corn, maize, minerals, wood, cotton, water for machinery; every valuable and important produce, all requiring their more immediate attention. We had a pleasant ride home, and when we got back amongst the lanes leading to the village, stopped every moment to admire and wonder at the rare and beautiful blossoms on the trees; and pulled branches of flowers off them, more delicate and lovely than the rarest exotics in an English hot-house.

2d. — This morning, the weather was damp and rainy, but in the afternoon we took a long walk, and visited several Indian cottages, all clean, and the walls hung with fresh mats, the floors covered with the same; and all with their kitchen utensils of baked earth, neatly hung on the wall, from the largest size in use, to little dishes and *jarritos* in miniature, which are only placed there for ornament. We also went to purchase *jicaras*, and to see the operation of making and painting them, which is very curious. The flowers are not painted, but inlaid. We were fortunate in procuring a good supply of the prettiest, which cannot be procured anywhere else. We bought a very pretty *sutunacua*, and a black rebozo. The women were not at all anxious to sell their dresses, as they make them with great trouble, and preserve them with great care.

We had a beautiful walk to the Magdalena, about a mile from the village. Every day we discover new

beauties in the environs. And one beauty we saw on entering a small rancho, where they were painting jicaras at a table, while a woman lay in the shaking fever in a bed adjoining, which was quite consistent with the place. This was a lady, the proprietress of a good estate some leagues off, who was seated on her own trunk, outside the door of the rancho. She was a beautiful woman in her prime, the gentlemen said *passée*, and perhaps at eighteen she may have been more charming still ; but now she was a model for a Judith — or rather for a Joan of Arc, even though sitting on her own luggage. She was very fair, with large black eyes, long eyelashes, and a profusion of hair as black as jet. Her teeth were literally dazzling — her lips like the reddest coral — her color glowing as the down upon a ripe peach. Her figure was tall and full, with small, beautifully formed hands, and fine arms. She rose as we came in, and begged us to be seated on a bench near the door ; and with the unceremoniousness of travellers who meet in outlandish places, we entered into conversation with her. She told us her name, and her motives for travelling, and gave us an account of an adventure she had had with robbers, of which she was well fitted to be the heroine. It appears that she was travelling with her two sons, lads of fifteen and sixteen, when they arrived at this rancho to rest for the night ; for by this time you will understand that those who travel hereabouts, must trust to chance or to hospitality for a night's lodging. To their surprise, they found the farmers gone, their dogs gone, and the house locked. They had no alternative but to

rest as they could, among their luggage and mules, in the yard in front of the house. In the middle of the night they were attacked by robbers. The boys instantly took their guns, and fired, but without effect. Still, in the darkness, the robbers probably imagined that there were more people and more arms, and when she, dragging a loaded musket off one of the horses, prepared to join in the engagement, the cowardly ruffians took flight—a good half dozen, before a woman and two boys. She was particularly indignant at the farmers, these “*malditos rancheros*,” as she called them, who she said had been bribed or frightened into withdrawing their dogs and themselves.

We returned home after a long walk, in the dark and in the midst of all the howling, yelping, snarling, barking dogs, which rushed out as we went by, from every cottage in Uruapa.

After supper, they sent for a clever Indian girl, who understands Spanish as well as her native idiom, and who translated various Castilian words for us into the original Tarrascan, which sounds very liquid and harmonious. To-morrow we shall leave Uruapa and this hospitable family, whose kindness and attention to us we never can forget. It seems incredible that we have only known them a few days. We have, however, the hopes of seeing them again as we pass through Valladolid, where they intend removing in a few days.

PASCUARO, 4th December.

We left Uruapa yesterday morning at eleven

o'clock, accompanied part of the way by Señor Ysa-saga and other gentlemen, amongst whom was Madame Yturbide's brother. We are now returning to Morelia, but avoided *Curu* and the rocks, both to save our animals, and for the sake of variety. We rode through large tracts of land, all belonging to the Indians. The day was agreeable and cloudy, and the road, as usual, led us through beautiful scenery, monotonous in description, but full of variety in fact. Though nearly uninhabited, and almost entirely uncultivated, it has pleased Nature to lavish so much beauty on this part of the country, that there is nothing melancholy in its aspect; no feeling of dreariness in riding a whole day, league after league, without seeing a trace of human life. These forest paths always appear as if they must, in time, lead to some habitation; the woods, the groves, the clumps of trees, seem as if they had been disposed, or at least beautified by the hand of art. We cannot look on these smiling and flowery valleys, and believe that such lovely scenes are always untenanted — that there are no children occasionally picking up these apricots — no village girls to pluck these bright, fragrant flowers. We fancy that they are out in the fields, and will be there in the evening, and that their hamlet is hid behind the slope of the next hill; and it is rather when we come to some Indian hut, or cluster of poor cabins in the wilderness, that we are startled by the conviction that this enchanting variety of hill and plain, wood and water, is for the most part unseen by human eye, and untrod by human footstep.

We had no further adventure during this day's journey than buying bread and cheese from sheer hunger, at a little wooden tavern by the road-side, whose shelves were covered with glittering rows of bottles of brandy and *mezcal*. At some of the Indian huts also we bought various bunches of *platanos*, that most useful of fruits, and basis of the food of the poor inhabitants of all the tropical climates. It has been said that the banana is not indigenous in America, and that it was brought over by a friar to Santo Domingo. If so, its adopted country agrees with it better than its native land; but I believe there are many traditions which go to prove that it did already exist in this hemisphere before the sixteenth century, and that the Spaniards did no more than increase the number of the already indigenous species. Its nutritive qualities, and the wonderful facility with which it is propagated, render it at once the most useful of trees, and the greatest possible incentive to indolence. In less than one year after it is planted the fruit may be gathered, and the proprietor has but to cut away the old stems and leave a sucker, which will produce fruit three months after. There are different sorts of bananas, and they are used in different ways; fresh, dried, fried, &c. The dried plantain, a great branch of trade in Michoacan, with its black shrivelled skin and flavor of smoked fish or ham, is exceedingly liked by the natives. It is, of all Mexican articles of food, my peculiar aversion.

About four o'clock we arrived at the small village of Tziracuaratiro, a collection of Indian cottages, with little gardens, surrounded by orange and all

manner of fruit trees. As we had still one or two hours' of day-light, and this was our next halting place, we wandered forth on foot to explore the environs, and found a beautiful shady spot, a grassy knoll, sheltered by the surrounding woods, where we sat down to rest and to inhale the balmy air, fragrant with orange blossom. We were amused by a sly looking Indian, of whom C——n asked some questions, and who was exceedingly talkative, giving us an account of his whole *ménage*, and especially praising beyond measure his own exemplary conduct to his wife, from which I infer that he beats her, as indeed all Indians consider it their particular privilege to do ; and an Indian woman who complained to a *padre* of her husband's neglect, mentioned, as the crowning proof of his utter abandonment of her, that he had not given her a beating for a whole fortnight. Some one asked him if he allowed his wife to govern him. "Oh ! no," said he, "that would be the mule leading the arriero !"

There was nothing to be seen in the village, of which it hardly deserves the name, but a good-looking old church, which two old women were sweeping out ; but they told us they rarely had mass there, as the *padre* lived a long way off. The *Alcalde* permitted us and our escort to occupy his house, consisting of three empty rooms with mud floors ; and about seven the next morning, we were again on horseback, and again en route for Pascuaro ; a pretty ride of eleven or twelve leagues. We breakfasted at the village of *Ajuma*, in a clean hut, where they gave us quantities of tortillas and chile, baked by some

very handsome *tortilleras*. A number of women were carrying about a virgin all covered with flowers, to the sound of a little bell. It was about four o'clock when we arrived at the hills near Pascuaro. Here we dismounted from our horses, and remained till it was nearly dusk, lying on the grass, and gazing on the lake, as the shadows of evening stole slowly over its silver waters. Little by little the green islands became indistinct; a gray vapor concealed the opposite shores; and like a light breath spread gradually over the mirrored surface of the lake. Then we remounted our horses, and rode down into Pascuaro, where we found the Señora H——a as before, ready to receive us, and where, our mules being disabled, we propose remaining one or two days.

5th. — We have been spending a quiet day in Pascuaro, and went to mass in the old church, which is handsome and rich in gilding. At the door is printed in large letters — “For the love of God, all good Christians are requested not to spit in this holy place.” If we might judge from the observation of one morning, I should say that the better classes in Pascuaro are fairer and have more color than is general in Mexico — and if this is so, it may be owing partly to the climate being cooler and damper, and partly to their taking more exercise — there being no carriages here — whereas in Mexico, no family of any importance can avoid having one.

We were very anxious to see some specimens of that Mosaic work, which all ancient writers upon Mexico have celebrated, and which was nowhere

brought to such perfection as in Pascuaro. It was made with the most beautiful and delicate feathers, chiefly of the *picaflores*, the humming birds, which they called *huitzitzilin*. But we are told that it is now upwards of twenty years since the last artist in this branch lived in Pascuaro, and though it is imitated by the nuns, the art is no longer in the state of perfection to which it was brought in the days of Cortes. We are told that several persons were employed in each painting, and that it was a work requiring extraordinary patience and nicety, in the blending of the colors, and in the arrangement of the feathers. The sketch of the figure was first made, and the proportions being measured, each artist took charge of one particular part of the figure or of the drapery. When each had finished his share, all the different parts were re-united, to form the picture. The feathers were first taken up with some soft substance with the utmost care, and fastened with a glutinous matter upon a piece of stuff—then, the different parts being re-united, were placed on a plate of copper, and gently polished, till the surface became quite equal, when they appeared like the most beautiful paintings; or, according to these writers, more beautiful from the splendor and liveliness of the colors, the bright golden, and blue, and crimson tints, than the paintings which they imitated. Many were sent to Spain, and to different museums both in Europe and Mexico; but the art is now nearly lost; nor does it belong to the present utilitarian age. Our forefathers had more leisure than we, and probably we have more than our descendants

will have, who, for aught we know, may by extra high-pressure, be able to

“Put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.”

We, however, saw some few specimens of saints and angels, very defective in the sketch, but beautiful in the coloring, and quite sufficient to prove to us that there was no exaggeration in these accounts.

7th. — We rode yesterday to the shores of the lake, where we embarked in a long canoe, formed of the hollow trunk of a tree, and rowed by Indians, a peculiarly ugly race, with Tartar-looking faces. The lake was very placid — clear as one vast mirror, and covered with thousands of wild ducks, white egrets, cranes and herons ; all those water-fowl who seem to whiten their plumage by constant dipping in pools and marshes and lakes. On the opposite shore, to the right, lay the city of Tzinzunzan, and on a beautiful island in the midst of the lake, the village of *Janicho*, entirely peopled by Indians, who mingle little with the dwellers on the main land, and have preserved their originality more than any we have yet seen. We were accompanied by the Prefect of Pascuaro, whom the Indians fear and hate in equal ratio, and who did seem a sort of Indian *Mr. Bumble* ; — and after a long and pleasant row, we landed at the island, where we were received by the village alcalde, a half-caste Indian, who sported a pair of bright blue merino pantaloons ! I suppose to distinguish himself from his blanketed brethren. The island is entirely surrounded by a natural screen of willow and ash trees ; and the village consists of a few scattered houses, with small cultivated patches of ground — the alcalde's house, and an old church.

We walked, or rather climbed all over the island, which is hilly and rocky ; and found several great stones entirely covered with the ancient carving. Moved by curiosity, we entered various caverns where idols have been found, and amongst others, one large cave, which we had no sooner groped our way into, than I nearly fell down suffocated by the horrible and most pestilential atmosphere. It appears that it is the sleeping-place of all the bats in the island, and heaven forbid that I should ever again enter a bat's bed-chamber ! I groped my way out again as fast as possible, heedless of idols, and all other antiquities, seized a *cigarito* from the hand of the astonished prefect, who was wisely smoking at the entrance, lighted it, and inhaled the smoke, which seemed more fragrant than violets, after that stifling and most unearthly odor.

The chief food of these islanders, besides the gourds and other vegetables which they cultivate, is the white fish, for which the lake is celebrated ; and while we were exploring the island, the Indians set off in their canoes to catch some for us. These were fried at the *alcalde's*, and we made a breakfast upon them, which would have rejoiced the heart of an epicure.

We then went to visit the church ; and though the cottages are poor, the church is, as usual, handsome. Amongst other curiosities there, is a Virgin, entirely covered with Indian embroidery. The organist's place is hereditary in an Indian family, descending from father to son. The long-haired Indian who played it for us, has such a gentle ex-

pression, and beardless face, that he looks like a very young woman. Some of the Indians here are very rich, and bury their money; and one, called Agustin Campos, who has beautified the church, as we read on an inscription carved on a stone outside, has thirty thousand dollars, is much respected, and has the addition of *Don* to his name; yet wears a coarse blanket like his fellow men. We staid some hours on the island, and went into some of the huts where the women were baking tortillas, one Indian custom at least, which has descended to these days without variation. They first cook the grain in water with a little lime, and when it is soft peel off the skin — then grind it on a large block of stone, the *metate*, or, as the Indians (who know best) call it, the *metatl*. For the purpose of grinding it, they use a sort of stone roller, with which it is crushed, and rolled into a bowl placed below the stone. They then take some of this paste, and clap it between their hands, till they form it into light round cakes, which are afterwards toasted on a smooth plate, called the *comalli*, (*comal* they call it in Mexico) and which ought to be eaten as hot as possible.

On our return, we had the variety of a slight storm, which ruffled the placid surface of the lake, and caused the rowers to exert all their strength to bring the canoe to port before it should become more violent.

This morning we walked all through Pascuaro, which can boast of many good houses, a square and Portales, and ended by going to visit the convent of

Santa Catarina. We saw some of the nuns, who wear white dresses, and instead of veils, the black Indian reboso. They were common-looking women, and not very amiable in their manners; but we did not go further than the outside entry. On our return, we met a remarkable baby in arms, wearing an enormous white satin turban, with a large plume of white feathers on one side, balanced on the other by huge bunches of yellow ribbons and pink roses. It also wore two robes, a short and a long one, both trimmed all round with large plaitings of yellow satin ribbon. It was evidently very much admired as it passed along. To-morrow, our mules having recovered, we set off for Valladolid.

VALLADOLID, 9th.

About half past seven we left Pascuaro, which, considering that we had a long day's journey before us, was scarce early enough. We regretted very much taking leave of the Señora H——a, who has been so kind to us, and whom we can certainly never hope to see again. I observe that in these long days' journeys, we generally set off in silence, and sometimes ride on for hours without exchanging a word. Towards the middle of the day we grow more talkative, and again towards evening, we relapse into quiet. I suppose it is that in the morning we are sleepy, and towards evening begin to grow tired; feeling sociable about nine o'clock, A. M., and not able to talk for a longer period than eight or ten hours. It was about four in the afternoon when we reached Cuincho, where we were welcomed by the

damselfs of the baths, whose father is now still more of an invalid than before. It is a lonely life that these poor girls lead here, nor should I think their position a very secure one. Their poverty, however, is a safeguard to a certain extent, and there are few robbers in this country in the style of *Morales*. We were tempted to stop here and take a bath, in consequence of which it was dark when we set off for Morelia. The horses, unable to see, took enormous leaps over every little streamlet and ditch, so that we seemed to be riding a steeple-chace in the dark. Our gowns caught upon the thorny bushes, and our journey might have been traced by the tatters we left behind us. At length we rode the wrong way, up a stony hill, which led us to a wretched little village of about thirty huts, each hut having ten dogs on an average, according to the laudable custom of the Indians. Out they all rushed simultaneously, yelping like three hundred demons, biting the horses' feet, and springing round us. Between this canine concert, the kicking of the horses, the roar of a waterfall close beside us, the shouting of people telling us to come back, and the pitch darkness, I thought we should all have gone distracted. We did, however, make our way out from amongst the dogs, re-descended the stony hill, the horses leaping over various streamlets that crossed their path — turned into the right road — and entered the gates of Morelia without further adventure, between nine and ten o'clock.

MORELIA, 11th.

We have passed the last few days very agreeably

in this beautiful city, seeing everything worthy of notice, and greatly admiring the wide and airy streets, the fine houses, the handsome public buildings, but especially the cathedral, the college, and the churches. It has also a fine square, with broad piazzas occupying three of its sides, while the cathedral bounds it to the east. There is a crowded market in the plaza, and a fine display of fruit and vegetables. The population is said to be a little upwards of fifteen thousand, but one would suppose it to be much greater. Living and house-rent is so cheap here, that a family who could barely exist upon their means in Mexico may enjoy every luxury at Valladolid. The climate is delightful, and there is something extremely cheerful in the aspect of the city, in which it differs greatly from Toluca. We received visits from various *Morelians*, amongst others, from Don Cayetano Gomez, the proprietor of San Bartolo.

We went one evening to the Alameda, a broad, straight walk, paved with flat stones, shaded by fine trees, under which are stone benches, and bounded by a low stone wall. Several ladies were sitting there, whom we joined, and amongst others, a remarkably pretty *Poblana*, married into the Gomez family. The alameda is crossed by a fine aqueduct of solid masonry, with light and elegant arches. We drove to the *paséo*, a broad, shady road, where we met but few carriages; and the same evening we went out on foot, to enjoy the music of a very good military band, which plays occasionally for the amusement of the citizens. It is not to be supposed that, when Mexico can boast of so little society, there

should be much in a provincial town ; besides, this city has the pretension of being divided into *cliques*, and there are “first people” and “second-rate people” and “families in our set,” and so on ; so that some of the ladies being musicians, one set will get up a concert, another a rival concert, and there not being a sufficient musical society to fill two concerts, both fall to the ground. There is a neat little theatre, but at present no company. Some of the houses are as handsome as any in Mexico, but there is no city which has fallen off so much since the Independence as Morelia, according to the accounts given us by the most respectable persons.

We had a visit from the Bishop, Señor Portugal, one of the most distinguished men here, or in fact in the whole Republic of Mexico, a man of great learning, gentle and amiable in his manners, and in his life a model of virtue and holiness. He was in the cabinet when Santa Anna was President, concerning which circumstance an amusing story was told us, for the correctness of which I do not vouch, but the narrator, a respectable citizen here, certainly believed it. Señor Portugal had gone, by appointment, to see the President on some important business, and they had but just begun their consultation, when Santa Anna rose and left the room. The Minister waited — the President did not return. The time passed on, and still the Minister continued expecting him, until at length he inquired of an aid-de-camp in waiting if he could inform him how soon the President might be expected back. “I hardly know,” said the officer, “for His Excellency has gone to visit *Cola de plata*,”

(silver tail.) “And who may *Cola de plata* be?” said the Minister. “A favorite cock of His Excellency’s, wounded this morning in a fight which he won, and to whose care he is now personally attending!” The Bishop soon after sent in his resignation.

Accompanied by several of our friends, including one of the canons of the cathedral, we visited that splendid building the second day of our arrival. It is still wonderfully rich, notwithstanding that silver to the amount of thirty-two thousand marks has been taken from it during the civil wars. The high altar is dazzling with gold and silver; the railing which leads from it to the choir is of pure silver, with pillars of the same metal; the two pulpits, with their stairs, are also covered with silver; and the general ornaments, though numerous and rich, are disposed with good taste, are kept in good order, and have nothing tawdry or loaded in their general effect. The choir itself is extremely beautiful; so also is the carved screen before the organ, the doors of the first being of solid silver, and those of the other of richly carved wood. There is also an immense silver font, and superb lamps of silver. We particularly admired some fine paintings, chiefly by Cabrera, and especially a Madonna and child, in which there is that most divine expression in the face of the Virgin, the blending of maternal love with awe for the Divinity of the child. Four of these paintings, it is said, were sent here by a Spanish king, as far back as Philip the Second. These four are colossal in size, and are finely painted, but little cared for or appreciated, and placed in a bad light.

We were shown two saints, sent from Rome, loaded with false jewels, but carefully preserved in their respective shrines. All the holy vessels and priests' dresses and jewels were taken out for our inspection. The sacramental *custodia* cost thirty-two thousand dollars, and the richest of the dresses eight thousand. There is a lamb made of one pearl, the fleece and head of silver; the pearl of great size and value.

We toiled up through winding stair-cases to the belfry; and it required the beautiful and extensive landscape spread out before us, to compensate us for this most fatiguing ascent. The bells are of copper, and very sonorous. The *canonigo* pointed out to us all the different sites which had been the scenes of bloody battles during the revolutionary war. The facilities for obtaining provisions, and the mountainous character of the country, are amongst the causes that have rendered this province the theatre of civil war. The padre afterwards took us into a large apartment, a sort of office, hung round with the portraits of all the bishops of Michoacan; one bearing so striking a resemblance to our friend, Don Francisco Tagle, that we were not surprised to find that it was in fact the portrait of one of his family, who had occupied the episcopal see of Michoacan; and below it were the Tagle arms, referring to some traditionary exploit of their ancestors. They represent a knight killing a serpent; and the motto is:

“Tagle que la serpiente mató y con la Princesa casó.”

“Tagle who killed the serpent, and married the Princess.”

The same evening, we visited a lady who possesses a most singular and curious collection of works in wax ; and more extraordinary still, they are all her own workmanship. Every fruit and every vegetable production is represented by her with a fidelity, which makes it impossible to distinguish between her imitation and the works of nature. Plates with bread, radishes and fish ; dishes of fowls, and chile, and eggs ; baskets full of the most delicious looking fruit ; lettuces, beans, carrots, tomatoes, &c. ; all are copied with the most extraordinary exactness. But her figures show much greater talent. There are groups for which an amateur might offer any price, could she be prevailed upon to offer these master-pieces for sale. There is a Poblana peasant on horseback before a rancho, looking back at him with the most coquetish expression ; her dress perfection, from the straw hat that half shades her features, to the beautiful little ankle and foot in the white satin shoe, the short embroidered petticoat, and the reboso thrown over one shoulder ; a handsome Indian, selling pulque and brandy in her little shop, with every variety of liquor temptingly displayed in rows of shining bottles, to her customers ; the grouping and coloring perfect, and the whole interior arrangement of the shop, imitated with the most perfect exactness. There is also a horrid representation, frightfully correct, of a dead body in a state of corruption, which it makes one sick to look at, and which it is inconceivable that any one can have had pleasure in executing. In short, there is scarcely anything in nature upon which her talent has not exercised itself.

Yesterday we visited the *Seminario* or college, a fine spacious old building, kept in good repair. The rector conducted us over the whole establishment. There is a small well chosen library, containing all the most classic works in Spanish, German, French and English ; and a larger library, containing Greek and Latin authors, theological works, &c., a large hall with chemical and other scientific apparatus, and a small chapel where there is a beautiful piece of sculpture in wood ; the *San Pedro*, by a young man, a native of Valladolid, so exquisitely wrought, that one cannot but regret that such a genius should be buried here, should not at least have the advantage of some years' study in Italy, where he might become a second Canova.

One must visit these distant cities, and see these great establishments, to be fully aware of all that the Spaniards bestowed upon their colonies, and also to be convinced of the regret for former times which is felt amongst the most distinguished men of the republic ; in fact, by all who are old enough to compare what has been with what is.

I ought not to omit, in talking of the natural productions of Valladolid, to mention that it is famous for *fleas*. We had been alarmed by the miraculous stories related to us of these vivacious animals, and were rejoiced to find ourselves in a house, from which, by dint of extreme care, they are banished. But in the inns and inferior houses, they are said to be a perfect pestilence, sometimes literally walking away with a piece of matting upon the floor, and covering the walls in myriads. The nuns, it is said, are or

were in the habit of harnessing them to little carriages, and of showing them off by other ingenious devices.

We rode out in the evening to meet our friends from Uruapa, who were expected to arrive yesterday ; I upon a very formidable and handsome cavalry horse, rather above his work, which some expected to run away, and others to throw me off, and which might have done both, but being a noble creature, did neither. We did not meet our friends, who, having been delayed on the road, only arrived this evening. We have, therefore, decided to remain here till to-morrow afternoon, when we shall continue our journey homewards by San Bartolo.

LETTER THE FIFTY-FIRST.

San Bartolo — Mass — Market — Rancheros — San Andrés — Insanity — Rancho — House of Don Carlos Heimbürger — Wild scenery — German songs — Las Millas — Leave-taking — Storm — Rainbow — El Pilar — La Gabia — Toluca — News — Copper *pronunciamento* — Return to Mexico — General Moran — Funeral obsequies — New theatre — *Cock's mass* — Santa Clara — Santa Fé prisoners — New year.

ANGANGUEO, 14th.

AFTER taking leave of all our hospitable friends in Morelia, we set off in the afternoon, and had a delightful ride to San Bartolo. Fortunately, the following day, (Sunday) was that of the Virgin of Guadalupe, one of the greatest festivals here ; so that we had an opportunity of seeing all the people from the different villages, who arrived in the court-yard by day-break ; and held a market in front of the hacienda. Various were the articles for sale, and picturesque the dresses of the sellers. From cakes, chile, atole and ground-nuts, to rebosos and bead rosaries, nothing was omitted. In one part of the market, the sturdy rancheros were drinking pulque and devouring hot cakes ; in another, little boys were bargaining for nuts and bananas ; countrywomen were offering low prices for smart rebosos ; an Indian woman was recommending a comb, with every term of endearment, to a young country-girl, who seemed perfectly igno-

rant of its use, assuring her customer that it was an instrument for unraveling the hair, and making it beautiful and shining, and enforcing her argument by combing through some of the girl's tangled locks.

Before breakfast we went to mass, in the large chapel of the hacienda. We and the family went to the choir ; and the body of the chapel was filled with rancheros and their wives. It is impossible to see, anywhere, a finer race of men than these rancheros ; tall, strong, and well made, with their embroidered shirts, coarse sarapes, and dark blue pantaloons embroidered in gold. After mass, the marketing recommenced, and the rebosos had a brisk sale. A number were bought by the men, for their wives or *novias* at home ; which reminds me of a story of ——'s, of a poor Indian woman in their village, who desired her husband to buy a *petticoat* for her in Mexico, where he was going to sell his vegetables. She particularly impressed upon him that she wished it to be *the color of the sky*, which at sunrise, when he was setting off, was of a flaming red. He returned in the evening, bringing, to her great indignation, a petticoat of a dusky gray, which happened to be the color of the sky when he made his purchase.

In the evening we rode through the fields, the servants and the young master of the house amusing themselves as they went, by the chasing and *colear* of the bulls. They have one small, ugly, yellow-colored bull, which they call tame, and which the *mozos* ride familiarly. They persuaded me to try this novel species of riding, a man holding the animal's head with a rope ; but I thought that it tossed its horns

in a most uncomfortable and alarming manner, and very soon slipped off. We stopped during our ride, at a house where the proprietors make a small fortune by the produce of their numerous beehives ; and walked along the banks of a fine clear river, winding through beautiful and verdant groves.

The next morning by six o'clock we were again on horseback, and took leave of San Bartolo. We rode by *Yndaparapeo*, a considerable village, with sloping shingle roofs, and about ten, reached Querendaro, breakfasted with Señor Pimentel, and then continued our journey towards *San Andrés*, where we were to pass the night. We had a horse with us, which occasionally fell down on the road, shivering all over, groaning, and apparently dying ; but which had twice recovered from these fits. But this day, having stopped beside a running stream to water our horses, the unfortunate beast fell again ; and when we had remounted, and were riding forward, a servant galloped after us, to tell us that the horse was dead at last ; so we left him to his lonely grave by the river's side. Great, therefore, was our amazement, when, some time after, we perceived him trotting along the road at a great rate, in pursuit of his party, apparently quite recovered.

We passed the night at San Andrés, a poor *venta*, but clean, consisting of three empty rooms, a spirit-shop, and a kitchen. Our escort slept in the piazza, rolled in their sarapes. Our beds were stuck up in the empty rooms, and we got some supper upon fowl and tortillas. We were interested by the melancholy air of a poor woman, who sat aloof on the

piazza, uncared-for, and noticing no one. We spoke to her, and found that she was insane, wandering from village to village, and subsisting on charity. She seemed gentle and harmless, but the very picture of misery, and quite alone in the world, having lost all her family. But "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." We saw her again in the morning before we set off, and saw her get some breakfast in the kitchen. The poor people of the *venta* seemed kind to her. They who dwell in comfortable houses, surrounded by troops of friends, and who repine at their lot, would do well to compare it with that of such a being.

This morning we left San Andrés, and have had a pleasant ride, in spite of a hard-trotting horse, which fell to my lot. Impossible to conceive more beautiful scenery than that which we passed through to-day. Some of the hills have a singular formation, each large hill appearing composed of a variety of smaller ones, of a pyramidal shape. We rode through Taximaraoa, without stopping, and breakfasted at a rancho, where the whole family were exceedingly handsome. The *ranchero* himself was a model for a fine-looking farmer, hospitable and well bred; knowing his place, yet without any servility. The *rancherita*, who was engaged in the kitchen, was so handsome, that we made every possible excuse for going to look at her.

About four o'clock we once more crossed the hills and came down upon the plains by which we left Anganguero; and passed over a river as red as blood, that looked as if hostile armies had been engaged in

fierce combat by its banks, and their bodies rolled in the tide. This ensanguined hue is, however, caused, not by warlike steel, but by peaceful copper ; not peaceful in its effects, by the way, at this moment ; for the whole country, more or less, is in commotion on the subject of copper coin.

You must know, that some few years ago, the value of copper was suddenly reduced by law to one half, causing a great loss to all, but much distress to the poor. The intrinsic value of the copper, however, bore so little relation to the value given to it, that it was a very productive business to counterfeit it, of which many unprincipled individuals availed themselves to such an extent, that it had almost become an openly exercised branch of industry all through the republic. When Santa Anna became provisional President, he ordered that all the copper coin, whose currency was now reduced to six or eight per cent. below par, should be given in to certain deposits which he named, promising to repay it in genuine coin of real value. But this naturally caused a still greater depreciation, bringing it down as low as sixty per cent. ; and still greater discontent, the people having little faith in the promise, and, in fact, the payment could not be made at the appointed time, because there were not sufficient coining machines ; and as the few new cents that did circulate, were said not to contain their real value, the distress became greater than ever. The merchants refused to receive copper, and there was no silver or small change. In the mean time, in many of the large haciendas, the proprietors have given checks to

the workmen, with which they have been able to buy what they required at the shops, which are attached to these haciendas.

The amount of the copper in circulation, cannot be calculated, for it is almost all counterfeit. It is supposed, however, to be at least from eight to nine millions of dollars. You may easily imagine the fortunes that will be made, (and as they say are being made) by those of the government party, who are buying up for sixty what will be paid them by favor of the government at the rate of a hundred.

We rode up the hills that lead to the house of Don Carlos Heimbürger, and were again hospitably received by him and his German friends. Nothing can have a finer effect than the view from the piazza of his house in the evening, looking down upon the valley. The piazza itself has a screen of green creepers, which have the effect of the curtain of a theatre, half drawn up. Behind the house, rises a dark frowning hill, in the form of a pyramid. In front, is the deep ravine, with the huts of the workmen, and while the moon throws her quivering beams over the landscape, the metallic fires of livid blue light up the valley. There is something wild and diabolic in the scene ; and as the wind howls round the valley with a dismal sound, it seems as if one were looking on at some unholy, magical incantation ; so that it is pleasant to return after a while to the comfortable rooms and cheerful fires within, which have so homely and domestic an air. We hope to spend to-morrow here, and the following day go on to Toluca, from whence I shall continue my letter.

TOLUCA, 19th.

The next day we visited the works, which are like all others, excepting that here they do not use quicksilver to extract the silver from the lead, but do so by the process of oxidation, by means of a reverberatory furnace. The people generally have an unhealthy appearance; as nearly all have who are engaged in these works — the air being loaded with particles of metal. After visiting the mills and the sheds, where the process of oxidation is carried on, and admiring the metallic riches of these mountains, we left the hot and poisoned atmosphere, and walked up the mountains clothed with a hardy vegetation — with every noble tree and flowering shrub — and pursued our course till we came to a fine waterfall, which plunges from a great height over the gigantic rocks.

The scenery here is rude and wild. The great rocks are covered with hardy trees — the pine, the cedar, the oak and the flowering laurel. The river, after dashing down in this noble cascade, runs brawling amongst the forest-clothed hills, till it reaches the plains, and flows on placidly. We spent an agreeable day, wandering amongst the mountains; and when we returned, sat on the piazza to watch the moon, as her broad disk rose over the valley, and the fierce, blue lights that made her mild fires grow pale.

All Germans are musical, and the gentlemen in this house did not belie the national reputation. After dinner, a bright fire blazing, doors and windows shutting out the cold air that whistled along

the hills, they struck up in chorus some of the finest national airs, particularly the Hymn to the Rhine — so that it seemed an illusion that we were in this wild, mining district, inhabited only by the poorest Indians; and we were transported thousands of miles off, across the broad Atlantic, even to the land where

“The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o’er the broad and winding Rhine.”

We also amused ourselves by examining Madame B——’s Album; and if those milk-and-water volumes, belonging to young ladies, where young gentlemen write prettinesses, be called Albums, some other name should be found for a book where some of the most distinguished artists in Germany, have left proofs of their talent, and where there is not one page which does not contain something striking and original. Nothing pleased me so much as the fanciful illustration of the beautiful legend of *Lorelei*, which Madame B—— read to us with great feeling. We became too comfortable here for hardy equestrian travellers, and had we staid much longer should have begun to complain of tough fowls, beds in barns, and other inconveniences, which we had hitherto laughed at; but we tore ourselves away from our Capua, and on the morning of the sixteenth, set off for *el Pilar*.

Don Carlos Heimbürger, M. and Madame B—— &c., accompanied us for seven leagues, all through the woods. We had a delightful ride. The day was cool and cloudy, and we were besides constantly

shaded by the noble forest trees. But we had not reached Las Millas before the sky was overcast ; the clouds became black and gloomy, and at length broke out in rain. We galloped fast, for the day, besides being rainy, was cold ; and in the afternoon reached Las Millas. Here we breakfasted in the little portico, which we preferred to the interior of the cottage, chiefly upon tortillas and boiled *tejocotes*, a fruit which grows in great abundance, and resembles a small apple. Here again were two Indian girls of admirable beauty, *dans leur genre*, baking tortillas. We were now obliged to part from our kind German friends, and to ride across the plains. But we had not gone more than half way, when the clouds burst forth in torrents, pouring their fury on our devoted heads, so that in five minutes we were all as drenched as if we had fallen into a river. We took shelter for a little while, under a solitary spreading tree, but the storm increased in violence, and it was advisable to gallop forwards, in order to arrive at el Pilar before it became dark. Suddenly, the most beautiful rainbow I ever beheld, smiled out from amongst the watery clouds. It formed a complete and well-defined arch of the most brilliant colors in the heavens, reflected by another on the plains, which, uniting with it, blended its fainter hues with the light of the heavenly bow.

We arrived at el Pilar tired and drenched, and greatly in need of the hospitable reception which was given to us by its mistress.

The following morning we set off early for *La Gambia*, feeling some regret that our journey was drawing

to a close. Some of us, who rode in front, found ourselves surrounded by several suspicious looking, well-armed men on horseback, who, under pretence of asking some questions, rode very close to us, and then stopped and faced round on their horses — but there was no danger, our escort being at a short distance, and when they observed its approach, they bestowed no further attention upon us. Don Xavier Hechavarria had returned to Mexico, but we were cordially welcomed by his brother-in-law, Don Manuel Gorospe, and so kindly pressed to remain some days, that nothing but our limited time would have induced us to set off next morning for Toluca. Here we arrived last night, having performed our journey by a different and more agreeable road than that of the “three hundred barrancas.” We entered Toluca by moonlight, and found that respectable city all in commotion on the subject of copper; presenting a very different aspect from the quiet and conventual air of repose which distinguished it little more than a month ago. Yesterday Colonel Y——, who has accompanied us during all this journey, left us, to return to Michoacan, having thus brought us back in safety to the point from which we started.

We are spending a very tiresome day in the inn, which, however, is a more decent place, and belongs to a better line of coaches than the other. We have been enlivened by several visits, amongst others, from the Comandante, and from an aid-de-camp of General Valencia's. For the first time since we left it, we have news from Mexico. Santa Anna, *dit-on*, is now Dictator or King in all but the name; affecting

more than royal pomp, yet endeavoring by his affability to render himself popular. Above all, he has made known his determination of not seizing an inch of ground belonging to the clergy ; which seizure of church property was the favorite idea of Paredes and the *progresistas*. This resolution he has not printed, probably in order not to disgust that party, but his personal declaration to the Archbishop and the padres of the Profesa, and in a letter to the Bishop of Puebla, is, that he will not only leave their property untouched, but that, were he out of power, he would draw his sword in their defence — for that, good or bad, he is a sincere Catholic. This has done much to reëstablish him in the good opinion of the clergy, and it is said that in every convent in Mexico, monks and nuns are now wearying Heaven with prayers in his behalf. In short, the conquerors and the conquered, those of the Progress, and those of the Dictatorship, seem all, barring a few noble exceptions, actuated by one motive ; personal interest.

Count C——a is restored to the command of his battalion *del Comercio*, which has been reëstablished (it having deserted to the federalists in the last revolution.) It appears that the President's favorite plan is to have thirty thousand men under arms ; and there is little doubt that he will bring this about. Sixteen new Generals have been created ; and General Tornel is made a General of Division. The Señora V——a has given a ball, at which she and other ladies appeared with trains, rehearsing, as it would seem, before the court drawing-rooms. I was told, and by good authority, that the present sent by Santa Anna to the lady of the commander-in-chief on her

birth-day, was a box containing three generals' belts, with a request that she would bestow them on those whom she considered most deserving of them; and that the lady herself buckled the sashes on her favored knights, in her own boudoir. Thus was Valor rewarded by the hand of Beauty; and

"Thus should desert in arms be crowned."

Meanwhile the master of the house presents himself with a disturbed and gloomy countenance, and doubts much whether we can have any dinner to-day, because no one will sell anything, either for copper or silver; moreover hints darkly that they expect a *copper pronunciamento* to-morrow; and observes that the shops are shut up.

Since we could get no dinner, we went out to take a walk; and methinks the Tolucanos have a fierce and agitated aspect. We attempted to go to mass this morning, but there was a congregation of léperos, who filled not only the church, but the whole enclosure and the street beyond, so that we could not even approach the church door. Unfortunately we cannot get a diligence until the 21st.

They have brought us at last, I will not say dinner—but something to eat.

20th. — This morning, the firing of squibs, the beating of drums, the shouting and confusion on the streets, announced that the ragamuffin population of Toluca had turned out; and going to the balcony, I very nearly received the salutation of

"A sky-
Rocket in my eye."

Orders have been given out by the *alcalde*, that copper shall be received in payment by the merchants, some of whom have declared they will only receive silver. A large mob has collected before the *alcalde's* door, with shouts of "Viva la plata! Muerta al cobre!" "Long live silver!" "Death to copper!" —apostrophizing these useful metals, as if they were two generals.

The merchants have issued a declaration, that during three days only, they will sell their goods for copper; (of course at an immense advantage to themselves.). The Indians and the poorer classes are now rushing to the shops, and buying goods; receiving in return for their copper about half its value. If Santa Anna keeps his word, the *patriotism* of the merchants will be rewarded.

C——n has just had a visit from one of the merchants, who wishes his conduct to be represented in a proper light in Mexico.

MEXICO, 22d.

With much joy we stepped into the diligence early yesterday morning, accompanied by the *Comandante* of Toluca, and retraced our road to Mexico; for though Toluca is a fine city, with clean, airy houses, wide, well-paved streets, and picturesque in its situation, there is something sad and deserted in its appearance, an air of stagnation that weighs upon the spirits; and the specimens we have seen of its lower orders are not inviting. We had rather an agreeable journey, as the day was cool, and we had the diligence to ourselves. We breakfasted

again at Cuajimalpa, took leave of the interesting *itzcuintepotzotli*, still hanging from its hook — and again ascended the eminence from which Mexico suddenly bursts upon the view, and after a short absence, with all the charm of novelty. Before we arrived at Tacubaya, we were met by a carriage containing Señor A—— and his lady, who insisted on our leaving the diligence ; and carried us off to their own house, where we now are. On the second of January, we expect to take our final departure from the “great city of the lake.”

28th December. — Another old year about to chime in ! Another Christmas past away ! But during these last few days, it has been all in vain to attempt finishing my letter, between making arrangements for our journey, receiving and returning visits, going to the opera, and seeing and revisiting, all that we had left unseen or wished to see again before leaving this. People seem determined that we shall regret them, and load us with kindness and attentions the more flattering, that now at least they are entirely personal, and cannot proceed from any interested motive. We have reason to think them both steady and sincere in their friendship. . . .

General Moran has died, universally regretted. He has been embalmed according to the system of *Ganal*, and his funeral was performed with extraordinary magnificence, the troops out, the foreign ministers and the cabinet following on foot, the former in full uniform, and a great train of carriages reaching along the whole Calle San Francisco, from the

church to the square. The body, dressed in a general's uniform, was carried upon a splendid bier, and was so perfectly embalmed, that he seemed not dead, nor even asleep, but lying in an attitude of repose. The expense of this operation will probably prevent its ever becoming very common ; and certainly there are but few cases where it can be advisable to adopt it. An *embalmed dynasty* might be a curious sight. To trace the features of a royal line, from Charlemagne to Charles the Tenth — from Alfred to William the Fourth, would be a strange study. Mary of Scotland, and Elizabeth, lying in the repose of death, yet looking as they lived and hated centuries back, might be a curious piece of antiquity. A Hernan Cortes — a Washington — a Columbus — a Napoleon ; men, whose memory for good or for evil, will survive time and change — it would be a strange and wondrous thing, if we could look on their features as they were in life. But it is to be trusted that this method of successfully wrestling with the earth for what it claims as its due, will not generally prevail ; or at the end of a few centuries, the embalmed population would scarce leave room for their living and breathing descendants ; nor is it an agreeable idea that one might, in a lapse of ages, grace the study of an antiquary, or be preserved amongst the curiosities of a museum. I would stuff birds and beasts, and preserve them in cabinets, but not the remains of immortal man. *Dust unto dust* ; and the eye of faith turned from the perishing remains, to the spirit which has gone to the God who gave it.

The *funcion* performed in the General's honor,

within the church, was as magnificent as ecclesiastic and military splendor could render it. We were in the gallery above. The bier, placed on a lofty scaffolding, covered with black velvet and lighted with wax tapers, was placed near the altar. The music was solemn and impressive. Every respect has been shown to the deceased general, by Santa Anna's orders. Excepting the corps diplomatique and the officers, all within the church were in deep mourning. . . .

The chief difficulty we have in arranging our affairs here, consists in the perfect impossibility of persuading any tradesman to keep his word. They name the day, the hour, the minute, at which they are to be with you, or at which certain goods are to be sent to you. They are affronted if you doubt their punctuality, and the probability is, you never hear of them or their goods again. If they are not exact for their own interest, they will not be so for yours ; and although we have had frequent proofs of this carelessness, we are particularly annoyed by it now that we are within a few days of our departure. During our residence here, we have had little to do with shops and shopkeepers, having found it more convenient and economical to send to Paris or even to the United States for all articles of dress. Now, though everything must still be comparatively dear, the *bad times* have caused a great reduction in prices ; and dear as all goods are, they would be still dearer, were it not for the quantity that is smuggled into the republic. There are an amazing number of French shopkeepers ; French tailors, hatters, shoemakers, apothecaries, &c. ;

but especially French modistes, and perruquiers. The charges of the former are exorbitant, the latter are little employed except by gentlemen. There are also many Spanish shops, some German, and a few English ; but I think the French preponderate.

We went some time ago to see the *Monte Pio*, which is under the auspices of Señor Tagle ; and it is melancholy enough to see the profusion of fine diamonds and pearls that are displayed in these large halls. After a certain time has elapsed without their being redeemed, the pledged articles are sold ; gold and silver, in whatever form, by the weight, but jewels for their intrinsic value. There is a sale once a week. We were shown privately the jewels of the *Virgen de los Remedios* ; which are very superb.

There is a small theatre lately established, called the Theatre of *New Mexico*, where there is a Spanish company, the same whom we saw two years ago in Vera Cruz. They are drawing away various persons from the principal theatre. Their object seems to be to make people laugh, and they succeed. On Christmas Eve we went there to see the *gracioso* (harlequin) in a woman's dress, dance the *Tripili*, an old Spanish dance, accompanied with singing. They introduced some appropriate lines concerning the late troubles about the *copper*, which were received with great applause. Just as they were concluding the *Tripili*, a young gentleman in the pit, I do not know whether Mexican or Spanish, rose, and waving his hand after the manner of a man about to make an address, and requesting attention, kindly favored the audience with some verses of his own, which were received with

great good-nature ; the actors bowing to him, and the pit applauding him. It seemed to me a curious piece of philanthropy on his part.

At midnight we went to the church of Santa Clara, to attend what is called the *Misa del Gallo*, the Cock's Mass ; which is private, — only respectable persons being admitted by a private entrance ; for midnight mass in Mexico takes place with shut doors, as all nightly reunions are dreaded. Santa Clara being attached to the convent of that name, we remained after mass to see the white-robed sisters receive the sacrament from the hands of a priest, by the small side-door that opens from the convent to the church. The church was lighted, but the convent was in darkness ; and looking in through the grating, we could only distinguish the outline of their kneeling figures, enveloped in their white drapery and black veils. I do not think there were a dozen persons in the church besides ourselves.

A good deal of interest has been excited here lately about the Texian prisoners taken in the Santa Fé expedition, the first detachment of whom have arrived, after a march of nearly two thousand miles, and are now lodged in the convent of Santiago, about two miles from the centre of the city. As their situation is represented to be very miserable, and as it is said that they have been stripped of their hats, shoes and coats ; some of the Mexican families, and amongst others, that of Don Francisco Tagle, regardless of political enmity, have subscribed to send them a supply of linen and other necessary articles, which they carried out there themselves.

Being invited to accompany them to Santiago, I did so ; and we found the common men occupying the court-yard, and the officers the large hall of the convent. So far, they have been treated as prisoners of war generally are ; but it is said to be the intention of Santa Anna to have them put in chains, and sent out to sweep the streets, with the miserable prisoners of the Acordada. Colonel C——, who was presented to me, seemed to treat the whole affair very lightly, as the fortune of war ; and had evidently no idea that any such fate was in store for them ; seeming rather amused by the dress of the monks, whom he now saw for the first time. In the Mexicans, generally, there seems very little if any vindictive feeling against them ; on the contrary, a good deal of interest in their favor, mingled with some curiosity to see them. The common men appeared more impatient and more out of spirits than the officers. We shall probably know nothing more of their fate, before leaving Mexico.

We had some intention of paying a last visit to the Museum before we went ; and Don José Maria Bustamante, a friend of ours, professor of botany, and considered a man of learning, was prepared to receive us ; but we were prevented from going. I must, however, find time to answer your question as to the population. The Mexican republic is supposed to contain upwards of seven millions of inhabitants ; the capital, two hundred thousand. Their number cannot be exactly fixed, as there has been no general census for some time ; a labor in which a commission, with Count Cortina at its head, has

been employed for some time past, and the result of which will be published shortly. All other questions must be replied to *de vive voix*.

I must now conclude my last letter written from this place ; for we are surrounded by visitors, day and night ; and, to say the truth, feel that it is only the prospect of returning to our family, which can counterbalance the unfeigned regret we feel at leaving our friends in Mexico. My next letter will most probably be dated from Vera Cruz.

LETTER THE FIFTY-SECOND.

Last day in Mexico — Theatre — Santa Anna — French minister's — Parting — Diligence — Last look of Mexico — Fatigue — Robbers — Escort — Second impressions — Baths at Jalapa — Vera Cruz — Some account of San Juan de Ulua — Siege of 1825 — Siege of 1838 — General Bustamante — Theatre — Of the north winds.

VERA CRUZ, 6th January, 1842.

HAVING concluded our arrangements for leaving Mexico on the second of January, we determined, as the diligence started long before daybreak, not to attempt taking any rest that night. We went out early, and took leave of the Dowager Marquésa de Vivanco, who was confined to the house by illness, and whose kindness to us has been unremitting ever since our arrival. It is a sad thing to take leave of a person of her age, and in her delicate state of health, whom there is scarcely a possibility of our ever seeing again. Some days before, we parted also from one of our oldest friends here, the Countess C——a. The last day, besides the Spaniards, who have been our constant friends and visitors ever since we came here, we had melancholy visits of adieu from Señor Gomez Pedraza and his lady — from the families of Echavarría, of Fagoaga, Cortina, Escandon, Casaflores, and many whose names are unknown to you. Amongst others was the Güera Rodriguez.

About eight o'clock, accompanied even to the door of the carriage by a number of ladies who were with us to the last, and amongst these were P——a C——a and L——z E——n, we broke short all these sad partings, and with the A——s and the family of the French Minister, set off for the theatre of New Mexico ! I can imagine your surprise at such a finale, but it was the only means left us of finishing a painful scene and of beguiling the weary hours yet remaining before the diligence started, for it was in vain to think of rest or sleep that night. The theatre was very crowded, the play an amusing piece of *Diablerie*, called the “*Pata de Cabra*,” (the goat's foot) badly got up, of course, as its effect depends upon scenery and machinery. I believe it was very entertaining, but I cannot say we felt inclined to enter into the spirit of it. The family of General V——a were there, and this being the day of a great diplomatic dinner, given by Santa Anna, various officers and diplomates came in late and in full dress. I was informed by one of the company, that six colonels stood the whole time of dinner behind His Excellency's chair ! I wonder what French officer would do as much for Louis Philippe. *Vogue la galère !* From the theatre, which concluded about one, we drove to the house of the —— Minister, where we spent a very grave half hour, and then returned home with a very splendid *brioche*, of generous proportions, which Madame La Baronne de —— had kindly prepared for our journey.

Arrived at the A——s, we sat down to supper, and never was there a sadder meal than this, when

for the last time we sat at the hospitable board of these our earliest and latest Mexican friends. We were thankful when it was all over and we had taken leave, and when, accompanied to the inn by Señor A——d and other gentlemen, we found ourselves fairly lodged in the diligence, on a dark and rather cold morning, sad, sleepy and shivering. All Mexico was asleep as we drove out of the gates. The very houses seemed sunk in slumber. So terminated our last Mexican *New Year's Day*.

When we reached the eminence, from which is the last view of the valley, the first dawn of day was just breaking over the distant city, the white summits of the volcanos were still enveloped in mist, and the lake was veiled by low clouds of vapor, that rose slowly from its surface. And this was our last glimpse of Mexico!

The diligence is now on a new and most fatiguing plan of travelling night and day, after leaving Puebla, so that, starting from Mexico at four o'clock on the morning of the second of January, it arrives in Vera Cruz early on the morning of the fifth, saving a few hours and nearly killing the travellers. The government had granted us escorts for the whole journey, now more than ever necessary. It was five in the afternoon when we reached Puebla, and we set off again by dawn the next morning.

We had just left the gates, and our escort, which had rode forward, was concealed by some rising ground, when, by the faint light, we perceived some half dozen mounted cavaliers making stealthily up to us across the fields. Their approach was first dis-

cerned by a Spanish lady who was with us, and who was travelling with strings of pearl and valuable diamonds concealed about her person, which made her peculiarly sharp-sighted on the occasion. “*Ladrones!*” said she, and every one repeated “*ladrones!*” in different intonations. They rode across the fields, came up pretty close to the diligence, and reconnoitred us. I was too sleepy to be frightened, and reconnoitred them in return with only one eye open. The coachman whipped up his horses — the escort came in sight — and the gentlemen struck into the fields again. The whole passed in a minute or two. The soldiers of the escort came riding back to the diligence, and the captain, galloping up to the window, gave himself great credit for having “frightened away the robbers.”

We arrived at Perote when it was nearly dusk — supped, and started again at eleven o’clock at night. We passed a horrible night in the diligence, and were thankful when daybreak showed us the beautiful environs of Jalapa. It is singular that on a second impression, returning by this road, the houses appear handsomer than they did before, and nature less beautiful. I conclude that this is to be accounted for simply from the circumstance of the eye having become accustomed both to the works of nature and of man, which characterize this country. The houses which at first appeared gloomy, large and comfortless, habit has reconciled us to, and experience has taught us that they are precisely suited to this climate of perpetual spring. The landscape, with its eternal flowers and verdure, no longer astonishes and be-

wilders us as when we first arrived from a country where, at that season, all nature lies buried in snow. Besides, in our last journey through Michoacan, we have passed among scenes even more striking and beautiful than these. Then the dresses, which at first appeared so romantic ; the high, Moorish-looking saddle, the gold-embroidered manga, the large hat, shading the swarthy faces of the men, the colored petticoat and rebozo and long black hair of the women, though still picturesque, have no longer the charm of novelty, and do not attract our attention. The winter also has been unusually severe for Mexico, and some slight frosts have caused the flowers of this natural garden to fade. And besides all this, we were tired and sleepy and jolted, and knew that we had but an hour or two to remain, and had another day and night of purgatory in prospect. . . .

Still, as we passed along the shady lanes, amongst the dark chirimoyas, the green-leaved bananas, and all the variety of beautiful trees, entwined with their graceful creepers, we were forced to confess that winter has little power over these fertile regions, and that in spite of the leveller, *Habit*, such a landscape can never be passed through with indifference.

Arrived at Jalapa, we refreshed ourselves with the luxury of a bath, having to pass through half the city before we reached the bathing establishment, from which there is the most beautiful view of wood, water and mountain that it is possible to behold. The baths are the property of a lady who has a cotton factory and a good house in the city ; and fortunate she is in possessing a sufficient portion of worldly

goods ; since, as she informed us, she is the mother of twenty children ! She herself, in appearance, was little more than thirty. We then returned to breakfast, and shortly after left Jalapa.

I will not inflict upon you a second description of the same journey ; of Plan del Rio, with its clear river and little inn — of Puerto del Rey, with its solid majestic bridge thrown over the deep ravine, through which rushes the impetuous river Antigua — or of how we were jolted over the road leading to Paso de Oveja, &c. Suffice it to say, that we passed a night, which between suffocating heat, horrible jolting and extreme fatigue, was nearly intolerable. Stopping to change horses at Santa Fé, we saw, by the light of the torches which they brought to the door, that we were once more among bamboo-huts and palm trees. Towards morning, we heard the welcome sound of the waves, giving us joyful token that our journey was drawing to a close ; yet when we entered Vera Cruz and got out of the diligence, we felt like prisoners, who have been so long confined in a dungeon, they are incapable of enjoying their liberty, we were so thoroughly worn out and exhausted. How different from the agreeable kind of fatigue which we used to feel after a long day's journey on horseback !

Breakfast, and a fresh toilette, had however their due influence. We were in a hotel, and had hardly breakfasted, when our friend, Don Dionisio Velasco, with some other gentlemen, arrived, and kindly reproaching us for preferring an inn to his house, carried us and our luggage off to his fine airy dwell-

ing, where we now are, and where a good night's rest has made us forget all our fatigues.

As we must remain here for one or two days, we shall have time to see a little more of the city ; and already, upon a second survey, sad and dilapidated as it now appears, I can more readily imagine what it must have been in former days, before it was visited by the scourge of civil war. The experience of two Mexican revolutions makes it more easy for us to conceive the extent to which this unfortunate city must have suffered in the struggle made by the Spaniards, to preserve the castle, their last bulwark in this hemisphere. San Juan de Ulua, in spite of the miserable condition in which it now is, remains a lasting memorial of the great works which almost immediately after their arrival on these shores, were undertaken by the Spanish conquerors.

In 1682, sixty-one years after they had set foot on Aztec soil, they began this fortress, in order to confirm their power. The centre of the space which it occupies, is a small island, where the Spaniard, Juan de Grijalva, arrived, one year before Cortes reached the Mexican continent. Having found the remains of two human victims there, they asked the natives why they sacrificed men to their idols, and receiving for answer, that it was by orders of the kings of *Acolhua*, the Spaniards gave the island the name of Ulua, by a natural corruption of that word.

It is pretended that the fortress cost four millions ; and though this immense sum is no doubt an exaggeration, the expense must have been very great, when we consider that its foundations are below the water,

and that for nearly three centuries it has resisted all the force of the stormy waves that continually beat against it. Many improvements and additions were gradually made to the castle ; and, in the time of the viceroys, a first-rate engineer paid it an annual visit, to ascertain its condition and to consider its best mode of defence, in case of an attack. In 1603, however, Vera Cruz was sacked by the English corsair, Nicholas Agramont, incited by one Lorencillo, who had been condemned to death for murder in Vera Cruz, and had escaped to Jamaica. Seven millions of dollars were carried off, besides three hundred persons of both sexes, whom the pirates abandoned in the Island of Sacrificios, when they re-embarked.

In 1771, the Viceroy, then the Marquis de la Croix, remitted a million and a half of dollars to the governor, in order that he might put the castle in a state of defence ; and the strong bulwarks which still remain, attest the labor that has been bestowed upon it. The outer polygon, which looks towards Vera Cruz, is three hundred yards in extent ; to the north it is defended by another of two hundred yards ; whilst a low battery is situated as a rear guard in the bastion of Santiago ; and on the opposite front is the battery of San Miguel. The whole fortress is composed of a stone which abounds in the neighboring island, a species of coral, excellent for building, *pedra mucara*.

In 1822, no stronghold of Spanish power remained but this castle, whose garrison was frequently reinforced by troops from Havana. Vera

Cruz itself was then inhabited by wealthy and influential Spaniards. Santa Anna then commanded in the province, under the orders of Echavarri, the Captain-General, and with instructions from Yturbide, relative to the taking of the castle. The commandant was the Spanish General Don José Davila. It was not, however, till the following year, when Lemaux succeeded Davila in the command of the citadel, that hostilities were begun by bombarding Vera Cruz.

Men, women and children then abandoned the city. The merchants went to Alvarado, twelve leagues off, whilst those who were driven from their houses by a shower of balls, sought a miserable asylum amongst the burning plains and miserable huts in the environs. Some made their way to Jalapa, thirty leagues off; others to Cordova and Orizava, equally distant. With some interruptions, hostilities lasted two years, during which there was nearly a constant firing from the city to the castle, and from the castle to the city.

The object of General Barragan, now commander-in-chief, was to cut off all communication between the garrison of the castle and the coasts, and to reduce them to live solely upon salt provisions, fatal in this warm and unhealthy country. In 1824 the garrison, diminished to a mere handful, was replaced by five hundred men from the peninsula; and very soon these soldiers, shut up on the barren rocks, surrounded by water, and exposed to the dangers of the climate, without provisions and without assistance, were reduced to the most misera-

ble condition. The next year, Don José Copinger succeeded Lemaure, and continued hostilities with fresh vigor.

This brave General, with his valiant troops, surrounded by the sick and the dying, provisions growing scarcer every day, and those that remained corrupt and unfit to eat, yet resolved to do his duty, and hold out to the last. No assistance arrived from Spain. A Mexican fleet was stationed off the Island of Sacrificios and other points, to attack any squadron that might come from thence; while the north winds blew with violence, keeping back all ships that might approach the coasts. "Gods and men," says a furious republican, (Zavala) "the Spaniards had to contend with; having against them, hunger, sickness, the fire and balls of the enemies, a furious sea covered with reefs, a burning atmosphere, and above all, being totally ignorant as to whether they should receive any assistance."

The Minister of the Treasury, Esteva, then came from Mexico, and proposed a capitulation; and the Spanish General agreed that should no assistance arrive within a certain time, he would give up the fortress; evacuating it with his whole garrison, and with the suitable honors. The Spanish succors arrived a few days before the term was expired, but the commander of the squadron, seeing the superiority in point of numbers of the Mexican fleet, judged it prudent to return to Havana to augment his forces. But it was too late. On the fifteenth of September, the brave General Copinger, with the few troops that remained to him, marched out of the fortress,

terminating the final struggle against the progress of Revolution, but upholding to the last, the character for constancy and valor which distinguished the sons of ancient Spain.

Of its last assault by the French squadron in 1838, there is no need to say anything. Every newspaper, as you will remember, gave an account of the capitulation of what the French gazettes called "San Juan de Ulua, the St. Jean d'Acre of the new world, which our mariners saluted as the Queen of the Seas, *vierge sans tache*," &c.

6th. — We have just had a visit from General Bustamante, who, with his aid-de-camp, a son of General Calderon, (formerly governor of Jalapa) intends shortly to sail in the Jason for Havana. We have also had a visit from the commander of that vessel, Captain Puente, who succeeded our friend Captain E——a; and who has been kindly endeavoring to make arrangements for taking us also, not having before been aware of our intentions of leaving Vera Cruz at this period. But although we should have much pleasure in returning by the vessel that brought us, we fear that, without putting the officers to great inconvenience, it will be impossible for them to accommodate so many, for we know the *carte du pays*. It is therefore probable that we shall go by the English packet, which sails on the eighth, but unfortunately goes round by Tampico, not very agreeable at this season.

We went to mass this morning, which was said to be particularly crowded in consequence of the

general desire to catch a glimpse of the Ex-President.

I find, personally, one important change in taste if not in opinion. Vera Cruz cookery, which two years ago I thought detestable, now appears to me delicious! What excellent fish! and what incomparable *frijoles*! Well, this is a trifle; but after all, in trifles as in matters of moment, how necessary for a traveller to compare his judgments at different periods, and to correct them! First impressions are of great importance, if given only as such; but if laid down as decided opinions, how apt they are to be erroneous! It is like judging of individuals by their physiognomy and manners, without having had time to study their character. We all do so more or less, but how frequently we find ourselves deceived!

7th. — We went to the theatre last evening. In the boxes, there were only a lady and gentleman, besides our party. The pit however was full; but there are no good actors at present. We have been walking about to-day, notwithstanding the heat, purchasing some necessary articles from French modistes and French perfumers, most of whom, having got over the fever, are now very well satisfied to remain here and make their fortune. We afterwards walked down to the Mole, and saw the pleasantest sight that has met our eyes since we left Mexico — the sea covered with ships. It was refreshing to look again on the dark blue waves, after so long an absence from them. Commodore —

of Mexico, who was present, pointed out the Jason, and the Tyrian, Captain Griffin, lying out in the harbor, and strongly recommended us to go in the latter, as did the English consul, with proper patriotism. We have requested him to take our berths, when he goes to visit the captain on board this evening.

No sooner has this been done beyond recall, than we find that comfortable arrangements have been made for taking us in the Jason, which goes direct to Havana. It is now too late, so we can only regret our precipitation. There is another beautiful Spanish vessel just arrived, the *Liberal*, Captain Rubalcava, who, with Captain Puente, of the Jason, has been to see us this evening. If the wind holds fair, the packet sails to-morrow; but the experienced predict a norther.

The symptoms of this terrible wind, which blows in the Mexican Gulf, from the autumnal to the vernal equinox, are known not only to the sailors, but to all those who have lived some time in this city. The variation in the barometer is the surest sign. A land breeze from the north-west first blows gently, then varies to the north-east, then changes to the south. The heat is then suffocating, and the summits of all the great mountains appear cloudless and distinct against the deep-blue sky, while round their base floats a veil of semi-transparent vapor.

Suddenly, the tempest bursts forth; and all are instantaneously relieved — all but the poor mariners! The air becomes refreshed — clouds of dust come

sweeping along the streets, driving away, as it were, the pestilential atmosphere. Then there is no fever in Vera Cruz.

All communication is cut off between the castle and the city, and between the city and all foreign shipping. Sometimes the norther lasts three or four days, sometimes even twelve. If it turns to a southerly breeze, the tempest generally returns; if it changes to the east or north-east, the breeze generally lasts three or four days, and the ships in the port take advantage of this interval to escape, and gain the high seas. These gales are particularly dreaded off the coasts of Tampico.

8th. — We sail in a few hours, the *norte* not having made its appearance, so that we expect to get clear of the coast before it begins. The Jason sails in a day or two, unless prevented by the gale. We only knew this morning that it was necessary to provide mattresses and sheets, &c., for our berths on board the packet. Fortunately, all these articles are found ready-made in this seaport town. We have just received a packet of letters, particularly acceptable as bringing us news of home before our departure. I have also received two agreeable *compagnons de voyage* in the shape of books; Stephens's Central America, and Washington Irving's Life of Margaret Davison, opportunely sent me by Mr. Prescott. . . .

Our next letters will be written either at sea, or from Tampico.

LETTER THE FIFTY-THIRD.

Sail in the Tyrian — Norther off Tampico — The bar — The river Panuco — The Pilote — The shore — Alligator — “*Paso de Doña Cecilia*” — Tampico — Spanish consul’s house — Society — Navigation — Banks of the Panuco — Extraordinary inoculation — The “*Glorieta*” — Leave Tampico — Furious norther — Voyage — Arrival at Havana.

ON BOARD H. B. M. PACKET TYRIAN, 15th.

ON the 8th, having taken leave of the family of our friend, Señor Velasco, and of General Bustamante, whom we hope to see again in Havana, we went out in a little boat, accompanied as far as the packet by several gentlemen, and in a short time were standing on deck, looking our last of Vera Cruz and its sandbanks, and sopilotes and frowning castle, as the shores gradually receded from our view, while the Tyrian was making the best of her time to get clear of reefs and rocks, before the arrival of the norther. We regretted to find, that instead of being one of the new line of English packets, the Tyrian was the last of the old line; small, ancient and incommodious, and destined to be paid off on her return to England. Captain Griffin, the commander, who looks like an excellent, gentlemanly man, is in wretched health, and in a state of acute suffering. There were no passengers but ourselves, and a young Mexican, guilt-

less of any acquaintance with salt water, up to this date.

The very next morning, out burst the norther, and with loud howling swept over the ocean, which rose and tossed to meet the coming storm. Surely no wind ever had a voice so wildly mournful. How the good ship rolled, and groaned, and creaked and strained her old timber joints! What rocking, thumping, falling, banging of heads at the low entry of the cabin! Water falling into berths, people rolling out of them. What fierce music at night, as the wind, like a funeral dirge, swept over the ocean, the rain falling in torrents, and the sky covered with one dark, lugubrious pall! And how lonely our ship seemed on the world of waters!

But the next day, the storm waxed fiercer still, and the night was worse than the day. The waves that dashed over the deck, made their way into the cabin. At one time, we thought the ship had struck, and even the Captain believed that a mast had fallen. It was only a huge wave that broke over the deck with a sound like thunder, drowning the wretched hens and ducks, who little thought, when they left their comfortable English poultry-yard, they were destined to be drowned off Tampico—and drenching the men. Our little lamp, after swinging to and fro for some time, went out, and left the cabin in darkness. Impossible to sleep of course, and for the *first time* at sea, I confess to having felt afraid. Each time that the ship rolled upon her side on the slope of a huge billow, it seemed impossible that she could ever right again, or that she could avoid receiving the

whole contents of the next great watery mountain that came roaring on.

On the morning of the eleventh there was still no abatement of the storm. All was dark and dreary. The norther continued to blow with unrelenting fierceness, and the ship to rock and roll amongst a tumult of foaming billows. The nights in this pitch darkness seemed interminable. The berths being constantly filled with water, we dragged our mattresses on the floor, and lay there wishing for the dawn. But the dawn brought no relief. The wind howled on like a fierce wild beast, roaring for its prey. I had made my way every day up stairs, and by dint of holding on, and with a chair tied with strong ropes, had contrived to sit on deck. But this day, I retreated under cover behind the helmsman, when, lo ! a large wave burst over the ship, found me out in my retreat, and nearly throwing down several stout sailors in its way, gave me the most complete salt water bath I have had since I left New York. All that night we were tossed about in storm and darkness.

On the thirteenth the wailing of the norther grew fainter, and towards night it died away. On the fourteenth it veered round, and the coast of Tamau-lipas appeared in sight, faintly.

This morning opened with a slight norther ; nevertheless, they have hung out the packet flag and cast anchor, in expectation of the pilot boat. Meanwhile, all is at a stand-still, *morally* speaking, for we are rolling so, that it is scarce possible to write comprehensibly. We see the sad-looking shores of Tampi-

co, long, low and sandy, though to the south stretching out into gloomy, faintly-seen woods. We can distinguish the distant yellow sand and the white surf breaking furiously over the *bar*. The day is gloomy, but not cold. A slight rain accompanies the light north wind. Sea gulls are flying in circles round the ship and skimming the surface of the waves. The master looks impatient and anxious, and prognosticates another week of northers. Vessels, they say, have been detained here thirty days, and some even three months! No notice is taken of our signal—a sign that the bar is impassable.

16th. — The ship has rolled and pitched all night, and to-day we remain in the same predicament.

TAMPICO, 18th.

Yesterday morning the wind was much lighter, and a pilot boat came out early, in which the captain set off with his despatches; and we being assured that we might cross the ominous bar in safety, hired a boat for forty dollars, with ten sailors and a pilot, too glad at the prospect of touching the solid earth, even for one day. Having got into this boat, and being rowed out to the bar, we found that there the sea was very high, even though the day was calm. The numerous wrecks that have taken place here have given this bar a decidedly bad reputation. Great precaution is necessary in crossing it, constant sounding, and calm weather. It is formed by a line of sand hills under the water, whose northern point crosses that to the southward, and across which there is a passage, whose position varies with the shifting

sands, so that the pilots are chiefly guided by the surf.

Perched upon a sand bank was a regiment of enormous white pelicans, of thoughtful and sage-like physiognomy, ranged in a row, as if to watch how we passed the bar. Over many a drowning crew they have screamed their wild sea-dirge, and flapped their great white wings. But we crossed in safety, and in a few minutes more the sea and the bar were behind us, and we were rowing up the wide and placid river Panuco — an agreeable change. We stopped at the house of the *comandante*, a large, tall individual, who marched out and addressed us in English, and proved to be a native of the United States.

We stopped at a collection of huts, to let our sailors breakfast, where there is the house of a celebrated character, Don Leonardo Mata, a colossal old pilot, but who was from home at present. We amused ourselves by wandering along the beach of the river and making a collection of beautiful shells, which we left at the old pilot's house, to be kept there till our return. A sort of garden, attached to the house, is appropriately ornamented with the figure-head and anchor from a wreck. We got into our boat again and glided along the shores, on one side low and marshy, with great trees lying in the water; on the other also low, but thickly wooded and with valuable timber, such as logwood and ebony, together with cedars, India-rubber trees, limes, lemons, &c. On the bare trunk of a great tree, half buried in the water, sat an amiable-looking alligator,

its jaws distended in a sweet, unconscious grin, as if it were catching flies, and not deigning to notice us, though we passed close to it. A canoe, with an Indian woman in it, was paddling about at a very little distance. All these beautiful woods to the right contain a host of venomous reptiles, particularly the rattlesnake. Cranes and herons were fluttering across the surface of the river, and the sportsmen brave the danger of the reptiles, for the sake of shooting these and the beautiful rose-colored spoonbills and pheasants that abound there.

The approach to Tampico is very pretty, and about two miles from it, on the wooded shore, in a little verdant clearing, is a beautiful *ranchito* — a small farm-house, white and clean, with a pretty piazza. In this farm they keep cows and sell milk, and it looks the very picture of rural comfort, which always comes with double charm, when one has been accustomed to the sight of the foaming surges and the discomforts of a tempest-tossed ship. The sailors called it “El paso (the pass) de Doña Cecilia ;” which sounded delightfully romantic. The proprietress, this Doña Cecilia, who lives in such peaceful solitude, surrounded by mangroves, with no other drawback to her felicity but snakes and alligators, haunted my imagination. I trusted she was young, and lovely and heart-broken ; a pensive laynun who had retreated from the vanities and deceits of the world to this secluded spot, where she lived like a heroine upon the produce of her flocks, with some “neat-handed Phyllis” to milk the cows and churn the butter, while she sat rapt in contempla-

tion of the stars above, or the snakes below. It was not till after our arrival at Tampico that I had the mortification to discover that the interesting creature, the charming recluse, is seventy-eight, and has just buried her seventh husband ! I accept the account doubtingly, but henceforth shall endeavor to picture her to my mind as an ancient enchantress, dwelling amongst serpents, and making her venomous charms of

“ Adder’s fork, and blind-worm’s sting,
Lizard’s leg, and owlet’s wing.”

As you approach Tampico, the first houses that meet the eye, have the effect of a number of colored band-boxes ; some blue, some white, which a party of tired milliners have laid down amongst the rushes. On leaving the boat, and walking through the town, though there are some solid stone dwellings, I could have fancied myself in a New England village. Neat “shingle palaces,” with piazzas and pillars ; nothing Spanish, and upon the whole, an air of cleanness and cheerfulness astonishing to me who had fancied Tampico an earthly purgatory. We afterwards heard that these houses were actually made in the United States and sent out here. There are some good-looking *stores* ; and though there is certainly little uniformity in the architecture of the houses, yet considering that the city was built only sixteen years ago, I consider it a slandered place. In 1825, there were but a few Indian huts here, and any little commerce there was, concentrated itself in *Pueblo Viejo*, which stands on the shores of a lake,

some miles off. We were taken to the house of the Spanish Consul, a fine, airy, stone building, with a gay view from the windows ; — the very first house that was built in the place.

Its owner, Don Juan de la Lastra, Spanish Vice-Consul, is not here himself, but we were very kindly received by Don José de Gomez Mira, the Consul. In the evening, all the principal Spaniards in the place came to see C——n ; and having arrived here yesterday morning as perfect strangers, without the probability of finding any one whom we knew, we find ourselves surrounded by the most unexpected and gratifying attentions. As to what is called society, there is literally none in Tampico. Those who live here, have come in the hope of making their fortune ; and the few married men who are amongst them have been unwilling to expose their wives to the unhealthy climate, the plague of mosquitoes and *xin-xins*, the intermittent fevers, which are more to be dreaded here than the yellow fever, and the nearly total deprivation of respectable female society. The men, at least the Spaniards, unite in a sort of club, and amuse their leisure evenings with cards and billiards ; but the absence of ladies' society must always make it dull. Riding and shooting in the neighborhood are their out-of-door amusements, and there is excellent sport along the river, which may be enjoyed when the heat is not too intense.

Our captain, who has paid us a visit this evening, with several Englishmen, expects to get off to-morrow. We staid at home in the morning on account of the heat, and wrote letters, but in the afternoon

we made the most of our time, walking about the city, in which there is not much to see. There are many comfortable-looking large houses, generally built according to the customs of the country whereof the proprietor is a native. Were it not for the bar, which is a terrible obstacle, not only from the danger of crossing it, but from the detention that it causes, vessels having been stopped outside for months, Tampico would become a most flourishing port. Besides that the depth of water can permit vessels of burthen to anchor near the town, there is an interior navigation up the country, for upwards of forty leagues.

The banks of the river are described as being very beautiful, which we can easily believe from what we have already seen ; but for its beauties after passing Tampico ; its wooded shores dotted with white ranchos, its large cattle-farms, and its picturesque, old Indian town of Panuco, we must trust to hear-say. The country in the vicinity is described as being a wilderness of rare trees, matted together with graceful and flowering creepers, the wild haunts of birds of bright and beautiful plumage ; but our ardor to visit these tangled shrubberies was damped by the accounts of the myriads of *xin-xins* and *gar-rapatos* ; little insects that bury themselves in the skin, producing irritation and fever ; of the swarming mosquitoes—the horrid caimans that bask on the shore ; and worse than all, the venomous snakes that glide amongst the rank vegetation. Parrots and butterflies and fragrant flowers will not compensate for these.

We have just been hearing a curious circumstance connected with poisonous reptiles, which I have learned for the first time. Here, and all along the coasts, the people are in the habit of inoculating themselves with the poison of the rattlesnake, which renders them safe from the bite of all venomous animals. The person to be inoculated is pricked with the tooth of the serpent, on the tongue, in both arms, and on various parts of the body ; and the venom introduced into the wounds. An eruption comes out, which lasts a few days. Ever after, these persons can handle the most venomous snakes with impunity ; can make them come by calling them, have great pleasure in fondling them ; and the bite of these persons is poisonous ! You will not believe this ; but we have the testimony of seven or eight respectable merchants to the fact. A gentleman who breakfasted here this morning, says that he has been vainly endeavoring to make up his mind to submit to the operation, as he is very much exposed where he lives, and is obliged to travel a great deal on the coast ; that when he goes on these expeditions, he is always accompanied by his servant, an inoculated negro, who has the power of curing him, should he be bit, by sucking the poison from the wound. He also saw this negro cure the bite given by an inoculated Indian boy to a white boy with whom he was fighting, and who was the stronger of the two. The stories of the eastern jugglers, and their power over these reptiles, may perhaps be accounted for in this way. I cannot say that I should like to have so much *snaky* nature transferred into my composi-

tion, nor to live amongst people whose bite is venomous. . . .

We have just returned from a moonlight walk to the *Glorieta*, a public promenade, which they are making here, where there are some stone benches for the promenaders, close to which some public-spirited individuals had dragged the carcass of a horse, which obliged us to retrace our steps with all convenient speed.

As for provisions in this place, if we may judge by the specimens we have seen in this house, they are both good and abundant. We had especially fine fish, and a variety of vegetables. To-morrow, alas ! we return to the packet ; much refreshed, however, by two pleasant days on shore, and consoling ourselves for our prolonged voyage, by the reflection, that had we gone direct to Havana, we should not have seen Tampico ; and, as La Fontaine's travelling pigeon says,

" Quiconque ne voit guère
Na' guère à dire aussi. Mon voyage depeint
Vous sera d'un plaisir extrême.
Je dirai : j'étais là ; telle chose m'avint :
Vous y croirez être vous-même." ¹

TYRIAN, 19th.

Once more on board our floating prison. A *norte* is expected this evening, but at least it will now be

¹ He who sees little, little can he say ;
But when my travels I describe some day,
And say, " That chanced to me — there I have been"—
The pleasure you will feel will be so great,
You will believe, while hearing me relate,
That all these wonders you yourself have seen.

in our favor, and will drive us towards Havana. Our Spanish friends concluded their cordial and disinterested kindness, by setting off with us by day-break this morning, in a large boat with Spanish colors unfurled, crossing the bar with us, coming on board, and running no small risk in recrossing it, with every prospect of a norther before their eyes. We stopped at the house of the "*Marine Monster*," Don Leonardo Mata, before crossing the bar, took up our shells, and had the felicity of making his acquaintance. He is a colossal old man, almost gigantic in height, and a Falstaff in breadth ; gruff in his manners, yet with a certain clumsy good-nature about him. He performs the office of pilot with so much exclusiveness, charging such high prices, governing the men with so iron a sway, and arranging everything so entirely according to his own fancy, that he is a complete sovereign in his own small way — the *tyrant of Tampico*. He has in his weather-beaten face such a mixture of bluntness and slyness, with his gigantic person, and abrupt, half-savage manners, that, altogether, I conceive him to be a character who might have been worthy the attention of Walter Scott, had he chanced to encounter him. Old and repulsive as he is, he has lately married a pretty young girl, a subject on which he does not brook raillery. One amiable trait the old tyrant has in his character ; his affection for his old mother, who is upwards of ninety, and who resides at Mahon, and to whom he is constant in his attentions. At one time he was in the habit of sending her small sums of money ; but as they were frequently lost, he sent her five hundred dollars at once

by a safe conveyance. The old woman, he said, was so frightened by seeing such a quantity of money in her hut, that she could not sleep, and at length intrusted it to a *friend*, who carried it off altogether. Since then, he has assigned her fifteen dollars a month, upon which the old woman lives in what she considers great luxury.

We took leave of our friends an hour or two ago, but do not expect to set sail till the afternoon, as they are discharging the quicksilver which our vessel brought, and loading the silver which we carry away. Three young Englishmen came on board this morning, to see the packet, and are making a disagreeable visit, being perfectly overwhelmed by sea-sickness.

20th. — Last night arose a furious norther. To-day it continues ; but as it is driving us towards our desired haven, and away from these dangerous coasts, we need not complain. As usual on these occasions, I find myself alone on the deck, never suffering from the universal prostrator of landsmen. By way of variety, I have been sitting in the cabin, holding on to the leg of a table, and trying to read Stephens, with as much attention as circumstances will permit. All further attempts at *writing* must be delayed !

30th. — On the twenty-first the norther continued with unabated violence, the wild wind and the boiling waves struggling on the agitated bosom of the ocean, great billows swelling up one after the other and threatening to engulf us, the ship laboring and creaking as if all its timbers were parting asunder, and the captain in such a state of intense suffering that we were in great apprehension for his life. Hor-

rible days, and yet more horrible nights ! But they were succeeded by fine weather, and at length we had the consolation of seeing the moon, smiling placidly down upon us, like a harbinger of peace. On the evening of the twenty-sixth the full moon rose with a troubled countenance, her disk obscured by angry clouds. She shook them off, but still looked turbid and superb. A gloomy cloud, black as night, still stretched over her like a pall, thickly veiling, yet not entirely obscuring her light, and soon after she appeared, riding serenely in the high heavens, mildly triumphant. Of all who sing the praises of the moon, who should love her blessed beams from his inmost heart like the seaman ? Then the angry clouds dispersed ; — the north wind blew freshly, but not fiercely, as if even his blustering fury were partly soothed by the influence of her placid light ; — the studding-sails were set, and the Tyrian bounded on her course, eight knots an hour.

The next day the wind died away and then blew lightly from the opposite quarter. We were about two hundred and fifty miles from Havana, but were then driven in the direction of Yucatan. The two following days we had contrary wind, but charming weather. We studied the chart, and read, and walked on deck, and played at drafts, and sat in the moonlight. The sea was covered with flying-fish, and the “Portuguese men of war,” as the sailors call the independent little nautilus, sailed contemptuously past us in their fairy barks, as if they had been little steamers. A man fell overboard, but the weather being calm, was saved immediately. We have been

tacking about and making our way slowly towards Havana, in a zig-zag line. Yesterday evening the moon rose in the form of a large heart, of a red gold color. This morning, about four o'clock, a fine fresh breeze sprung up from the north-east, and we are going on our course at a great rate, with some hopes of anchoring below the Morro this evening. To-day being Sunday, we had prayers on deck, which the weather had not before permitted; — the sailors all clean and attentive, as English sailors are. Last night they sang "Rule Britannia," with great enthusiasm.

HAVANA, 31st.

Last evening we once more saw the beautiful bay of Havana, once more passed the Morro, and our arrival was no sooner known, than the Captain-General, Don Geromino Valdés, sent his *falua* to bring us to the city, and even wished us to go to his palace; but Don B——o H——a, who gave us so hospitable a reception on our first visit, came on board, and kindly insisted on taking us to his house, where we found everything as elegant and comfortable as before, and from whence I now write these few lines.

In the midst of our pleasure at being once more on dry land, surrounded by our former friends, and at receiving letters from home, we were shocked and distressed to hear of the unexpected death of our friend, the Señora de Gutierrez Estrada, who had followed her husband to Havana in his exile. What a blow to him, to her mother, to all her friends! . .

I shall send off this letter by the first opportunity, that you may know of our safe arrival.

LETTER THE FIFTY-FOURTH.

Havana — The carnival — The Elssler — La Angosta — *Ingenio* of Count V——a — General Bustamante — Lord Morpeth — Leave Havana — Voyage in the Medway — Old friends — Return to the United States.

HAVANA, 27th February.

It has been very agreeable for us to return here as private individuals, and to receive the same attentions as when we came in a public situation, but now with more real friendliness. Having arrived at the time of the carnival, we have been in the midst of masked balls, which are curious to see for once ; of operas, dinners, and every species of gaiety. But returning so soon, I shall enter into no details. The weather is beautiful, and this house, situated on the bay, receives every sea-breeze as it blows. The Elssler is still attracting immense and enthusiastic crowds ; and is now dancing in the theatre of Tacon, where she is seen to much more advantage than in the other. We have been breakfasting in the luxurious *Quintas* in the neighborhood, driving in the Paseo every evening in an open volante, attending the opera ; in short, leading so gay a life, that a little rest in the country will be agreeable ; — and we have accepted with pleasure the invitation of Count and

Countess F——a, to spend some time at *La Angosta*, one of their country places; a sugar and coffee estate. General Bustamante arrived in the *Jason*, a few days after us, they having sailed later. They had been very anxious concerning the fate of the *Tyrian*, in these northern gales off Tampico. We have received letters from our Mexican friends, and learn, with great sorrow, the death of the Dowager Marquesa de Vivanco, and of the Señora H——a of Pascuaro — also the *murder* of a Spanish physician, with whom we were intimately acquainted, — at his distant hacienda.

LA ANGOSTA, 13th March.

We have spent a most agreeable fortnight at La Angosta, and have also visited the Count and Countess V——a, in their plantation near this. General Bustamante was here for a day or two. Lord Morpeth also passed a few days with us; so that altogether we have had a pleasant party. We have been delighted with the elegant hospitality, without ostentation or etiquette, which we have met with here. But we shall now return so soon, that I shall reserve all particulars till we meet. . . .

ON BOARD THE STEAMSHIP MEDWAY, April 25th.

With a warning of only three hours, we came on board this splendid steamer, eight days ago, after taking a hurried leave of our kind friends, at least of all those who are now in Havana; for the Count and Countess de F——a and the Count and Countess

de V——a are still in the country. Don B——o H——a, and his family, accompanied us to the ship in the government *falua*. General Bustamante, with his young aid-de-camp, together with Señor de Gutierrez Estrada, and various other gentlemen, hearing of our sudden departure, came out in boats to take leave of us. Alas! those leave-takings!

We had the agreeable surprise of finding that we were acquainted with all our fellow-passengers. There are our particular friends the E——s, the Padre F——n and Mr. G——s, all from Mexico; M. D——s de M——s, who was attached to the French legation in Mexico, and is now returning from a mission to California; Mr. and Miss —— of Boston, &c. We came on board on the evening of the twentieth, but did not leave the harbor till the morning of the twenty-first. The day was beautiful, and as we passed out, we could distinguish the waving of many handkerchiefs from the balconies. In this floating palace, with large, airy berths, a beautiful cabin, an agreeable society, books, a band of music, ices, &c.; not to mention that important point, an excellent and good-hearted captain, we have passed our time as pleasantly as if we were in the most splendid hotel.

On the twenty-third we went out in a little boat, in the middle of the night, to Nassau, in New Providence, to buy some of those beautiful specimens of shell-flowers, for which that place is celebrated. We set off again at three in the morning of the twenty-fourth, on which day, being Sunday, we had prayers on board. The weather was beautiful, and even

with contrary wind, the Medway went *steaming* on her course, at the rate of nine knots an hour.

On the twenty-fifth we lay off Savannah. A pilot came on board, and we went up the river in a boat to the city, where we passed an agreeable day, and in the evening returned to the ship. Crowds of people from Savannah went out to see the steamer. The next day we cast anchor off Charleston, and again a pilot came on board ; but the day was stormy and gloomy, and only two of the passengers went on shore. We have now had several days of bad weather ; wind and rain ; and one night a storm of thunder and lightning ; yet down in the cabin there is scarce any motion, and we have been sitting reading and writing as quietly as if we were in our own rooms. After two years and a half of spring and summer, we feel the cold very much.

29th. — We are now passing the Narrows. Once more the green shores of Staten Island appear in sight. We left them two years and six months ago ; just as winter was preparing to throw his white shroud over the dolphin hues of the dying autumn ; the weather gloomy and tearful. Now the shores are covered with the vegetation of spring, and the grass is as green as emeralds. I shall write no more, for we must arrive to-day ; and I shall be the bearer of my own despatches.

The day is bright and beautiful. The band is playing its gayest airs. A little boat is coming from the Quarantine. In a few minutes more we shall be *at home* !

GLOSSARY

OF

SPANISH OR MEXICAN WORDS

WHICH OCCUR IN THE COURSE OF THE WORK, WHICH ARE GENERALLY EXPLAINED WHEN FIRST USED, BUT WHICH BEING REPEATED, THE READER MIGHT FORGET AND WISH TO REFER TO.

Administrador — Agent.

Alameda — Public walk with trees.

Aguador — Water-carrier.

Alacran — Scorpion.

Anquera — Coating of stamped gilt leather, edged with little bells, which covers the back of the horses.

Arriero — Muleteer.

Arroba — Spanish weight of twenty-five pounds.

Azotea — The flat roof of a house.

Barranca — Ravine.

Botica — Apothecary's shop.

Calle — Street.

Cargadores — Men who carry loads.

Chinguirito — Spirit made from sugar-cane.

Chile — Hot peppers.

Compadre and *Comadre* — Godfather and Godmother ; names by which two persons address each other, who have held the same child at the baptismal font, or have been sponsors together at a marriage, &c.

Canónigo — Canon or prebendary.

Cómicos — Aetors.

Camarista — Lady of honor.

Dia de Años — Birth-day.

Dulces — Sweetmeats.

Diário — Daily newspapers.

Frisonos — Large horses from the north.

Funcion — Solemnity — festival.

Frijoles — Brown beans.

Galopina — Kitchen girl.

Garbanzos — Chick-peas, *Cicer Arictinum*.

Gachupin — Name given to the Spaniards in Mexico.

Garita — City-gate.

Goleta — Schooner.

Gentuza — Rabble.

Honras — Funeral honors.

Hacienda — Country-place.

Ingenio de Azucar — Sugar plantation.

Inválidos — Disabled soldiers.

Jarro — Earthen jar.

Ladroncs — Robbers.

Lépcros — Beggars, low persons.

Litéra — Litter.

Monte Pio — Office where money is lent on security.

Mezcal — Brandy distilled from pulque.

Manga — Cloak made of cloth with a hole in the middle for putting the head through.

Novios — Betrothed persons.

Nuestro Amo — *Our Master*, used in speaking of the Host.

Ojo de Agua — Spring of water.

Portales — Covered portico supported by columns.

Pulqueria — Shop where pulque is sold.

Paséo — Public walk.

Paso — pace, pacing.

Padrino — Godfather.

Plaza — Square.

Patio — Court-yard.

Petate — Matting.

Poblana — Woman of Puebla.

Pronunciamiento — A revolution in Mexico.

Pronunciados — Those who revolt.

Rancho — A farm.

Ranchero — Farmer.

Rebozo — A scarf that goes over the head.

Reja — Iron grate.

Sopilote — Species of carrion vulture.

Sarape — A woollen blanket more or less fine, with a hole for the head to go through.

Traspaso — Conveyance, transfer.

Tilma — Indian cloak.

Tierra caliente — The hot land.

Tertulia — An evening party.

Toreador — Bull-fighter.

Tortilla — Species of thin cake.

Tortillera — Woman who bakes tortillas.

Vaca — Joint stock in gambling.

Vomito — Name given to the yellow fever.

Venta — Inn.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.



REC'D LD-URL
SEP 27 1973

SEP 17 1973

DISCHARGE-URL

MAR 12 1980

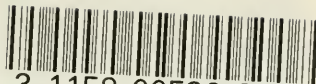
MAR 12 1980

REC'D LD-URL

FEB 20 1985

FEB 20 1985

Handwritten signature



3 1158 00536 8633

F
1213
C12
v.2

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 001 041 992 7

